ENTERTAINMENT / E3
Dolly Wood: Greta charms her way back to Tonyboy's heart

BUSINESS / B2-1
'I know what you ate and bought last year'

WORLD / A26
Chad rebels corner president in palace

SPORTS / A30
Super Bowl: New England Patriots vs New York Giants

2 opposition senators assail 'jobless growth'

THE COUNTRY'S HIGH ECONOMIC growth last year was "meaningless" because it did not result in more jobs and income for Filipinos, two opposition senators said yesterday.

Sen. Francis Escudero said that although the gross domestic product (GDP) grew 7.3 percent in 2007, the highest in more than

CONTINUED ON A2

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, February 4, 2008 ★★★ 11 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 37 P10 www.inquirer.net

Would-be successor was De Venecia's No. 2

By Norman Bordadora

SUPPORTERS SAY CONGRESS CITY REP. PROSPERO Nograles is a viable alternative to Speaker Jose de Venecia.

"He has been a congressman for five terms," said Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez.

"He (Nograles) has been committee

WOULD-BE SUCCESSOR, A2

Nograles allies offer JDV a 'graceful exit'

Plan is to avert floor showdown on speakership

NOGRALES: No. 2 in 1971 bar exams.

FILIPINO brewmaster Billy L. Galang shows off his beer, mixed with Vitamin B when is supposed to replace the essential vitamin lost when excessive amounts of alcohol are consumed, during the first International brewsters' Day held in Bangkok.

By TJ Burgonio

CONFIDENT THAT they have the numbers, allies of Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles will attempt to oust Speaker Jose de Venecia today to agree to a "graceful exit," but the House leader vowed to fight it out on the floor, raising the prospect of a bitter, protracted battle.

Allies of Nograles last night consolidated their forces in meetings at the homes of President Macapagal-Arroyo's son at the posh La Vista subdivision in Quezon City.

In separate dinners hosted by Representative Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo and Showbiz "Cesa" Arroyo, a manifesto seeking a change in House leadership and endorsing Nograles as the new Speaker was passed around for signing.

One of those present, Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez, said at press time that more than 100 lawmakers had signed the manifesto, and added: "We hope to reach 134 before the session starts tomorrow."

He said the rest of the signatures would be of congressmen travelling today from their districts to Manila.

"Once we reach 134, we will present the manifesto to the Speaker," he said in a phone interview. "We are trying to make it less painful for him

NOGRALES, A26

ANALYSIS

GMA to pay heavy price for ouster of De Venecia

By Amando Doronila

FISSURES IN THE ADMINISTRATION'S Lakas-CMD, the majority coalition that has controlled the House of Representatives for two decades, appear to ratchet the incendiary allegiance on the chamber floor a possible vote to unseat Speaker Jose de Venecia and oust his 12-year leadership.

The charge is being led by Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles, whose group claims to have lined up the signatures of 130 congressmen on a manifesto initiated by Rampi—the other main pillar of the majority—to replace de Venecia with a change in the House leadership.

Nograles' bid is the first serious threat to De Venecia's grip on the speakership. De Venecia is defiant. He wants a plenary vote of sorts: hold him, not just Nograles, responsible or send him packing. He says more than the 121 votes needed to unseat him.

Last July, De Venecia faced down a bid to depose him from Rep. Pablo Garcia of Cebu, who failed to muster the needed numbers.

Today's possible vote, unless averted, presents the explosive

ANALYSIS, A26

Pinoy's Vitamin Beer a hit in inventors' gab

BANGKOK—A BEER THAT TASTES some of the guilt out of drinking, a spray-on tan you would lie out in a bonfire and, yes, even a better mousetrap, are on display as inventors from around the globe gather to revel in thinking outside the box.

It may just be a jam spreader from Taiwan or a "cat avenger garbage bag" thought up by an Iranian, but many of the inventors from 27 countries are at an international show that finds creativity at its best (or worst) from their perches.

"Every time you give inventors an opportunity to have their ideas seen, that's what starts their blood flowing," said Deb Hsu, executive director of the Minnesota Inventors Congress.

More than 100 of their brainchildren are being unveiled at a conference of the International Federation of Inventors' Associations, a Hungary-based group celebrating its 40th anniversary this year.

While many of the inventions are highly technical efforts—possibly breakthroughs—in the fields of medicine, agriculture and environment, crowds on Saturday at a convention in suburban Bangkok were rather

INVENTORS, A2

After murder victims, SC will focus on poor

By Leila B. Salaverria

AFTER LENDING A HAND TO victims of political killings and enforced disappearances, the Supreme Court is now reaching out to those on the margins of society: It wants to make it easier for them to fight in court, assert their rights, and win justice.

In an interview with the Inquirer, Chief Justice Reynato Puno said he would spend half a workday, tentatively scheduled for March, aimed at "leveling the playing field" and providing legal help to the poor, including farmers, fishermen and indigenous peoples, who were usually intimidated by the air-conditioned court personnel.

Puno said the aims of helping the poor was "not debatable" and it was about time something was done about all the rhetoric of protecting the less privileged.

"This year, I have plans to shift focus from the civil rights to the socioeconomic rights of the people," he said. "The civil rights, those political rights, constitute the first wave of human rights."

"The second wave ... consists of the rights of the disadvantaged sectors of our society—the poor, children in conflict with the law, women, asylum seekers, the handicapped, farmers, fisherman, all of those in the margins of society ... So

AFTER, A2

EDSA DOS and Ebon in arrests in Sta. Mesa, Manila, bear markers telling of the first shot fired in the Philippine-American War.

Boracay drainage walk reads 'Barbers'

THE CONTROVERSIAL seal of the Philippine Tourism Authority with the name of its general manager on it.

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

BORACAY ISLAND—ESKO PO SI BARbero? Pulitiko ho siya! (Who is Barbero? He's a politician!)

That was the reaction of a local resident to the name of Robert Dean Barbers, general manager and chief executive officer of the Philippine Tourism Authority (PTA), that has been engraved on sidewalks along the main road of this island resort.

Barbers has drawn flak from some residents and resort owners after his name appeared on the PTA seal evident in many sections of the commercial walk marking the P146-million PTA drainage system project.

"He has no right (to put his name) because that (project) comes from our money. Why, is he running for office?" said a resort owner and long-time resident. The owner asked not to be identified out of concern for his business because of Barbers' position and authority.

Another resort owner, who is a community leader, said including Barbers' name in the seal showed "lack of professionalism."

BORACAY, A2

RP-US war actually began in Manila, not San Juan

By Nancy Carvajal

YEARS AFTER BEING CELEbrated on a bridge in San Juan City, the site where the first shot which sparked the Philippine-American War in 1899 was fired has been determined to be on Isunigo and Silencio

WARS, A2

Manila today will lead the commemoration of the 109th anniversary of the first shot that triggered the Philippine-American War, which left at least 600,000 Filipinos dead. It started commemorating the start of

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

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Vietnam joins RP vs Taiwan

Visit to Spratlys by island-nation's leader sparks warning, fears

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **GMA ET AL.** ordered to reply to writ pleas /A4
- **TASK FORCE** rejects 635 extralegal slays /A6
- **'WOWOWEE'** victims decry lack of assistance /A4

VIETNAM HAS JOINED THE PHILIPPINES IN warning that Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian's weekend visit to the disputed Spratly Islands in the South China Sea could spark renewed tensions in the region.

The Philippines expressed serious concern over the development which could work against the joint efforts of the claimant countries to achieve peace and stability in the region.

In a statement, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said Chen's visit was "unfortunate," more so because the Taiwanese leader landed on Ligao Island (called Taiping by Taiwan), the biggest island being occupied by Philippine forces.

"The Philippines therefore urges all parties concerned to exercise prudence, self-restraint and use diplomacy in the end to settle disputes in keeping with the spirit of the DOC (Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea)," Romulo said.

Vietnam described Taiwan's move as a serious escalation in the long-standing sovereignty row, most contentious media reported Sunday.

"This is an extremely serious act of escalation, violating Vietnam's territorial sovereignty over the Spratlys, creating tensions and further complicating the situation in the region," the Tuoi Tre (Youth) newspaper quoted Vietnam's foreign Ministry spokesperson Le Dung as saying.

Le Dung said Taiwan should take full responsibility for any consequences caused by its action.

Vietnam demands Taiwan put an immediate end to such provocations in the region," Dung said in a statement carried by the Vietnam News Agency.

Dung reiterated that Vietnam possessed strong historic evidence and legal grounds to confirm its sovereignty over the Spratly and Paracel archipelagos.

Chen visited the Spratly Islands on Saturday the Taiwan defense ministry said, in a move aimed at underscoring Taipei's claim to the disputed group.

In the first ever visit by a Taiwanese president, Chen inaugurated a 1,150-metre runway on the fortified Taiping islet. The project which began in mid-2006 is nearly complete. He also met with Taiwanese troops based on the island.

"There's no question about Taiwan's sovereignty on Taiping island, and we will continue to build infrastructure there to help beef up patrols and rescue missions," Chen said in a statement after returning from the island 1,600 km south of Taiwan.

Taiping's only inhabitants are several dozen Taiwanese troops stationed there. Taiwan forces have built medical facilities on the island for soldiers and passing sailors, and have installed weather and environmental surveillance equipment.

The Spratlys consist of about 130 barren islets, reefs and atolls dotting the world's busiest shipping lanes in the South China Sea.

The Philippines, China, Taiwan, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam each claim all or part of the low-lying islands, believed to be rich in oil, gas and fish stocks. All claimants except Brunei have troops based in the Spratlys.

China and Vietnam clashed diplomatically over the island group in 1988 and 1992. Other countries have engaged in low-level skirmishes over their own claims. China and Vietnam agreed last month to handle their disputes over the islands through negotiations and pledged to safeguard peace in the South China Sea. Cynthia D. Balana with AFP, AP reports

Senate: Neri, Lozada can run but they can't hide forever

By Cet C. Custodio Jr. and Tarra Quismundo

THREE DAYS AFTER DECLARING him a fugitive, the Senate has yet to get its hands on former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, who has scattered in clouds the grounds the Senate sergeant-at-arms while giving occasional interviews to media.

Senators continue to claim the Senate can not get hold of Neri, sought for his possibly damning testimony in the controversial National Broadband Network (NBN) deal, because Malacañang has given him safe haven.

"We're not disappointed, you don't expect the Senate to catch everyone. it stops with an arrest warrant. We are not equipped for that. But we will continue the hunt for Neri until the Supreme Court resolves," said Sen. Aquilino Pimentel. "The number one suspect is Malacañang because its officials are the ones who do not want him to appear [at the Senate]."

Echoing Pimentel, Sen. Panfilo Lacson said, "If every single, somebody powerful is behind Neri. That's why we cannot locate him. The Senate has sufficient resources to make the arrest but it is difficult if the one giving the protection is the establishment."

Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano said the Senate blue ribbon committee, which is looking into the NBN deal, would hold a caucus this week to decide on the next course of action not only with regard to Neri but also his consultant, Rodolfo Lozada, who is still on an overseas trip.

"I am disappointed that Secretary Ebdane and his Palace allies are determined to make a mockery of the powers of the Senate to investigate in aid of legislation and to compel witnesses to testify. Instead has become a priority of the Palace over transparency and accountability and the constitutional checks and balances," Cayetano said.

The Senate had ordered both arrested after they failed to attend Wednesday's Senate blue ribbon committee hearing into the cancelled $329 million NBN deal awarded to Chinese firm ZTE Corp.

Cayetano said he believed Neri was "panicking," as shown by his "inconsistent statements in blaming the Senate instead of himself for the adverse public opinion against him and for his loss of credibility."

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Broadcaster to take libel case to UN

DAVAO CITY—FRUSTRATED OVER the failure of the courts to protect journalists from libel suits in the country, the lawyer of jailed Davao broadcaster Alexander "Lex" Adonis plans to bring the latter's case to the United Nations and urge the world body to declare his sentence *forcible* libel a violation of human rights.

Lawyer Harry Roque said he was keen on elevating Adonis' case to the UN, after Philippine laws failed to protect the rights of the convicted broadcaster.

"Congress' promise to pass a law to decriminalize libel is not moving," Roque noted. "So we plan to take our case to the UN Human Rights Committee and eventually have the libel laws of this country declared a violation of the International Covenant on Civil-Political Rights (ICCPR)."

Roque said that since the UN body makes such a declaration, lawyers can ask the Supreme Court to rule outright that jail terms for libel violate the country's treaty obligations.

Roque said the new Supreme Court guidelines calling on all judges to impose fines rather than mete out jail terms on newsmen convicted of libel was a "laudable move" but it "won't benefit those already in jail."

Adonis, 41, was sentenced to a (turn) to four and a half years in prison for libel for remarks in documents.

The libel case stemmed from a series of radio commentaries in which Adonis identified a Davao City congressman as the man who ran make it through a blindfolded after his lover's husband caught them.

Gerry Lacuna, Inquirer Mindanao

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PRINT TOWN

'Wowowee' victims decry lack of aid 2 years after

By Kristine L. Alave

SINCE SEARS' DYING DURING THE "Wowowee" stampede of two years ago, Juanita Amorin, 37, has become paranoid. Ordinary things have taken on sinister meaning. A crowded market is a potential death trap while a tightly packed MRT coach is a monstrous waiting to happen.

Cold mornings terrify her, too, because don't relieve the ache in her arms, knees and left ankle—now covered by varicose veins—are at its most piercing.

Amorin said ABS-CBN, the network that produces Wowowee, had not given her and other injured victims any financial help to treat their injuries and the ailments—both physical and psychological—that took followed.

"I don't go into crowded places anymore. I also don't take the MRT during rush hour. I'm afraid something bad will happen," Amorin, a self-employed mother of four, told the Inquirer, adding that she still get flashbacks of the tragedy.

The injured had practically lost all hope ABS-CBN would help them that almost 70 of them recently asked that executives show "Eat Bulaga" on the GMA 7 network to let them try their luck in one of the latter show's games.

If Wowowee wouldn't help them, maybe the other show would, Amorin said.

On the morning of Feb. 1, 2005, a Saturday, 74 people were crushed to death as thousands rushed the Philsports Arena gates in Pasig City as soon as their were opened by security guards.

According to the National Bureau of Investigation, over 600 people were injured in the mad rush to get in for a chance at millions of pesos in prizes.

Of that number, 285 had sought financial assistance from the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC).

Since that fateful day their lives had been severely altered as they now help—from ABS-CBN or GMA 7—was welcome, the victims said.

Amorin said she had lost had a comprehensive X-ray since the stampede. The only medication she received was a pack of anti-anemic and in dull the pain, she said.

Not even a bag of rice

Montserrat Bernardo, 35, said she has had a had back since a steel barricade fell on her. She considered Amorin lucky because she was given painkillers while she received nothing.

"It has been two years. We have not received anything from Wowowee. Not even a bag of rice as a consolation," Bernardo said.

The network may have helped some families whose members died in the stampede, but the president of the medical network executives stands on the same stage two years ago, the victims said.

"They said they will help all of us," Amorin said. "We are not asking for much. I myself only want financial assistance for my 9-day," she said.

Lengthy court battle

Two years since the stampede, the victims have come to terms with the fact that they are in for a lengthy court battle.

Last week, the Supreme Court dismissed ABS-CBN's petition to junk the Department of Justice's investigation report that ruled the network had a criminal liability in the incident.

In a 22-page decision, the high court, through Associate Justice Conchita Carpio Morales, dismissed the network's suit accusing the DOJ prosecutors of being biased. The network said it would appeal the ruling.

For the victims, Feb. 4 means making a pilgrimage to the stadium. Beginning Sunday, the victims of the stampede started holding a vigil in front of the coliseum gates where it all happened. Early Monday morning, they will recount the incident.

"We will continue to remember and move onward no one the case until the end.

"We are fighting for our rights here. If they say that they didn't do anything wrong, then let's determine this through the legal process," she said.

GMA et al. ordered to reply to writ pleas

By Lelia B. Salmorin

THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS directed the country's highest officials to explain the fate of two alleged National Democratic Front consultants, one of whom was arrested in Manila, but have since been missing for almost a year.

The appellate court's Special Eighth Division directed President Macapagal-Arroyo, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., Philippine National Police Director General Avelino Razon Jr. and Army chief Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano to comment on the petitions for writs of amparo and habeas corpus filed by Lorena Santos on behalf of her parents, Elizabeth Principe and Leo Velasco.

In a Jan. 30 resolution, the court scheduled a hearing today on the petitions of Santos, who is seeking to free her mother and find her father. Santos had accused the military and the police of being behind the abduction of her parents.

The military arrested Principe in November last year for alleged rebellion, kidnapping, murder, robbery and arson. But Santos questioned the validity of the arrest warrants, of which there are many only two.

On the other hand, Velasco was allegedly abducted in Cagayan de Oro City in February last year. One of the abductors were a black shirt with the letters "CIDG" on the back, she said.

In her petitions, Santos asked the court to order the officials to produce her parents before the court and explain why the two should remain in detention.

She also asked the court to direct the officials to reveal her father's location and to stop from harassing, threatening her parents. She also sought permission to inspect police and military detachments, and to gain access to documents about her parents.

The Supreme Court, meanwhile, has issued a writ of amparo directing the human rights group Bayan Muna to respond to the amparo petition filed against them by Alberto Ochoa and Epifinio Reyes.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, February 4, 2008
4th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 2 S 15:13-14, 30; 16:5-13
Gospel: Mk 5:1-20

Jesus arrived on the other side of the lake in the region of the Gerasenes. He stepped out of the boat, and immediately a man with an unclean spirit who had come from the tombs met him. He lived among the tombs and no one could restrain him, even with a chain, for he had often been bound with fetters and chains but he would pull the chains apart and break the fetters, and no one had the strength to control him. Night and day among the tombs and in the hillsides, he was continually screaming and wounding himself with stones.

When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell at his feet and cried with a loud voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, son of the Most High God? For God's sake I beg you, do not torment me." He said this because Jesus had commanded, "Come out of the man, evil spirit." And when Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" he replied, "I cannot is my name, for we are many." And all of them kept begging Jesus not to send them out of the region.

Now, a great herd of pigs was feeding on the hillside, and the evil spirits begged him, "Send us to the pigs and let us enter them." So he let us be them go. The evil spirits came out of the man and entered the pigs, and immediately the herd rushed down the cliff and all were drowned in the lake. The herdsmen fled and reported this in the town and in the countryside, so all the people came to see what had happened.

They came to Jesus and saw the man freed of the evil spirits sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the same man who had been possessed by the legion. They were afraid. And when those who had seen it told what had happened to the man and to the pigs, the people begged Jesus to depart from their territory.

When Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed begged to stay with him. Jesus would not let him but said, "Go home to your people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you." So he went throughout the country of Decapolis telling everyone how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were astonished.

Commentary:

Although the young man from whom Jesus had cast out the evil spirits wanted to follow Jesus, the Lord recognized that this particular young man could do infinitely more good by staying at home and telling others around him of his Lord's tender mercies.

There is no limit to the measure of good that each of us can do at home, in the domestic church that is the family, and in our schools, places of work, and with our circle of friends. "Telling everyone how much Jesus has done for you" is our day-and-hour-of-the-clock calling, one that is bestowed upon every follower of Jesus.

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'Sit down, work better'

DAVAO CITY—THANKS TO AN ORDINANCE authored by a man, sales girls in stores here can finally sit down at work.

Rep. Councilor Edgar Bercyes, author of the city ordinance requiring stores to provide seats for their women workers, may have handed the ladies the equivalent of a left-handed compliment.

Bercyes said that by allowing women to rest as the workplace, they would be better able to serve their families when they get home.

"Since many women workers are also mothers and wives, they can no longer perform their equally important tasks at home after a hard day's work," Bercyes said.

The ordinance slaps a P1,000 to P5,000 fine or imprisonment of one to six months on employers found guilty of violating it.

— Germelina Lacorte, Inquirer Mindanao

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Task force rejects 635 extrajudicial killings

By Nikko Dizon

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE has stricken 635 murders off the list of 836 extrajudicial killings tallied by militant human rights group Karapatan, even as a government official called the bigger figure a "skewed ploy to project a climate of impunity" under the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The list was purged by the PNP's Task Force Usig, which was created yesterday to investigate the killings that had been widely blamed on the police and military, the DILG said yesterday via statement.

The DILG quoted Task Force chief (retired) Jefferson Soriano as saying the 635 cases were "deemed excluded because they do not fall under Usig's mandate."

Of the remaining 201 cases, the task force placed 123 on its own list of killings while it is still investigating the remaining 78 incidents.

Verification of Karapatan's list of extrajudicial killings was conducted by Task Force Usig last year.

"Four long efforts by the task force to validate these incidents demonstrate that Karapatan and leftist groups have succeeded a blatant lie of victims in a skewed ploy to project an alleged climate of impunity under the Arroyo watch," said Assistant Secretary Emelio Nilmo of the Department of the Interior and Local Government in the statement.

Of the 622 cases reported by Karapatan in 2007, Usig said 341 "were verified to be excluded from the task force's mandate because the killings were all established to be tinctured by private motives and not based on work or political affiliations or ideologies."

The DILG described Karapatan's "death list" as "being fixated by leftist groups in denouncing the Arroyo administration for purported state-sanctioned executions."

Karapatan deputy secretary general Jigs Clamor said the inquiries by photo the task force expect "comes as no surprise to Karapatan."

Gov't's diversionary tactics

"Usig is not really meant to investigate political killings but to discredit our data... It's part of the government's diversionary tactics to set aside the fact that extrajudicial killings continue," Clamor said.

Clamor said that to date, Karapatan's list had gone up to 836 extrajudicial killings. He said there new killings took place last month.

According to Usig, Karapatan included on its "padded list" members of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) who were killed in legitimate encounters with government troops and also listed members slain in the failed Oakwood jailbreak of 2003.

But Clamor said that no less than the Commission on Human Rights had said the alleged Abu Sayyaf members were summarily executed, and the court trial was ongoing.

6 alleged victims found alive

Usig also noted six alleged victims listed by Karapatan were found alive by authorities.

The DILG identified the alleged victims as Edwin Marcelinas in Windsor, Renato Bagsong in Batangas, Dhanis Nicasio and Diosdo Flores in Bulacan, Marlon de la Cruz in Isabela and Wilfred Asiatico in Quezon.

The DILG said that of the 57 cases of extrajudicial killings reported by Amnesty International, 23 were on the official Usig list, 27 were excluded while seven were being verified.

Of Bayan Muna's claim that 131 of its party list group members had been summarily executed, the task force said 71 cases were on its "validated" list while 60 were under probe.

The statement did not explain why the task force list had eight more cases than Bayan Muna.

Seminar Slated on Hospital Best Practices

With rare prospects and opportunities in the global medical tourism, the way to competing with other countries as a destination for overseas patients is for Philippine hospitals to collectively enhance the quality of their healthcare products and services. As an initiative to help improve the performance of hospitals in the country, the Center for Global Best Practices (telephone: 840-7141 to 45 loc 19 or **www.cgbp.org**) in collaboration with St. Luke's Medical Center is hosting a seminar entitled, "Best Practices in Hospital Management and Administration" on Friday, March 7, 2008 at the Peninsula Hotel, Makati City.

While some hospitals are performing well, there are many others who are lagging behind and facing operational difficulties ranging from staffing and labor problems, financial, administrative, regulatory, and healthcare quality issues. Clearly, there is a need to improve hospital management and approaches to problem issues. To address this, authorities from St. Luke's Medical Center, one of the world's best hospitals, will lecture and share their viewpoints on best practices that hospitals can use and benchmark to uplift the standards of hospitals in the country.

The pioneering seminar is aimed at helping hospital owners, investors, board of trustees, hospital administrators, medical directors and practitioners, healthcare managers and supervisors, hospital stakeholders and business consultants understand the right hospital management systems and proper administration. The one-day program will include topics on operation efficiencies, hospital performance indicators, customer service excellence (from admission to billings), marketing hospital services, and opportunities in partnership tie-ups. Gaining the right knowledge is one of the best ways to improve the efficiency, profitability, and quality standards of hospitals in the country.

Those who are interested to attend this seminar are encouraged to register early to avail of the early bird and group discounts. This is a limited-seats only event with pre-registration required.

Country's 1st Igorot general dies at 93

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—THE first Igorot general died on Saturday at the age of 93 after a lingering illness.

Brig. Gen. Pedro Bahan (ret.) was the first beneficiary of President Diosdado Macapagal's anti-discrimination policy, according to Bahan's relatives.

Macapagal wanted to promote an Igorot and a Muslim to general. "My life was the first one," said Bahan's grandson, Gabriel Bahan Bimlit Jr.

To the surviving members of the 66th Infantry Brigade, however, the man they went remembering was an "FB" hero—a "full-blooded Igorot," a term popular in the 1950s.

Sent to combat in WWII

As Bahan, Bahan was a member of Philippine Military Academy Class of 1940 and was one of its first graduates sent to combat when World War II broke out.

A pilot, he was grounded when Japan invaded the country, leaving him to join the guerrilla movement. His brigade was the first Philippine unit to enter Baguio after American planes bombarded the city to liberate it from the Japanese.

An American flyer was ripped over Bahan's white casket.

His six comrades who attended the wake felt the American flag was more appropriate for the war hero.

They folded the Philippine flag that had originally covered the casket and had it beside a set of model air planes while waiting for the general's honor guard composed of 100th cadets to arrive at the Bahan home here. He will be buried on Feb. 11.

In one corner of the home hangs a framed birthday memento made by the general's children, which they gave to their father when he turned 90.

Indira, Emma, Elsie and Sonny Bahan described their father in the card as a man "born to pave motherhood/patriotic [sides] pursued a military career and then earned the honor of being the first Igorot general."

Making Filipinos proud

"Needless to say, he made us all proud by serving [the country] well and leaving his mark on his chosen career."

Bahan's recollections were documented by Keith in a 1986 story for a local magazine.

Bahan, who his PMA "mistahe" (Tinguian) remembered as "Cabe," told his story to his grandson-chan you:

Bahan said he entered the PMA "out of necessity," because his family could not afford to send him to college after he graduated in 1935 from what used to be La Trinidad Agricultural High School (forerunner of Benguet State University).

"Class 1940 was the batch when the PMA became the PMA," Bahn quoted his grandfather as saying.

They were the nine military officials lamented the first graduate reforms at the academy, according to Academy Archs, a three-volume history of the PMA.

The Strike said class '40 endured a "stormy academic period" due to an "academic revolution."

Bahan told Keith he managed to graduate 19th in the class of 70, after entering 30th as a member of the "underrated squad." This was the rank cadets who needed to take remedial courses were often relegated to.

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Chinese top BI list of banned foreigners

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By Marguax C. Gruta

CHINESE NATIONALS TOPPED THE LIST of foreigners barred from entering the country last year, according to the Bureau of Immigration.

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan said more than 400 foreigners were prevented from entering the Philippines from June to December 2005 as a result of the bureau's intensified campaign against human smuggling.

Libanan said "101 Chinese were sent back to their home country during the six-month period. Next on the list were 53 Americans, 37 Europeans, 34 Japanese, 20 Indians and 12 Nigerians.

The foreigners were intercepted by immigration officers while attempting to slip into the country, Libanan said.

"We will continue the bureau's policy of strictly screening all arriving and departing foreigners to make sure that only legitimate foreign tourists, immigrants and travelers are allowed to enter the country," he said.

Bureau spokesperson Floro Balais Jr. said the foreigners had been included on the immigration blacklist of undesirable aliens.

Balais said 161 of the 427 banned foreigners were tourists who were refused entry after they were profiled "as likely to become public charges."

"A foreign passenger is usually deemed a public charge if he could not explain his purpose in coming to the country and if he is unable to show proof of his capacity to support his stay in the Philippines," he said.

The list of aliens included 64 who had no entry visas, 12 who were improperly documented, 54 who were on the BI blacklist, 46 who had no return tickets, and five unaccompanied minors.

Also on the list were seven foreigners who were turned away for exhibiting acts against decent mores, three who were on the bureau's watch list, and three aliens whose attempts to slip into the country were previously foiled.

WORKERS rush the construction of the drainage system on Boracay to help solve the flooding problem on the island resort. (ALVIN KASIGBAN)

Boracay drainage walk reads 'Barbers'

From page A1

"People's money, not his personal money, was spent on that project. It's giving the wrong impression when government officials spend our money," the resort owner said.

"It's bad taste .... In our country, we don't have people like him," said a European expatriate.

'Nothing wrong with it'

Barbers downplayed the use of his name in the engraving.

"It was the project's architect who designed that. I was surprised when I saw it. But I don't see anything wrong with it," Barbers told the Inquirer in a telephone interview on Sunday.

As in the case of many politicians who put their names on walking sheds, roads and bridges, Barbers' name is prominently displayed on the PTA seal.

The seal is about two feet in diameter and spans almost the entire width of the sidewalk that covers the drainage pipes. The seal has three circles, with the PTA logo at the center in red, yellow, white and blue.

Third circle

Engraved in the second circle are the words "Philippine Tourism Authority 1973." The last circle bears the slogan "Filipino sa Turismo sa Aklan" and the name "Robert Dennis B. Barbers" in blue.

The engraved seal can be found at intervals of about every 50 meters on one side of a 4.4-kilometer stretch of the main road from Barangay Balabag, located at the eastern side of the island's northwest coast, to Barangay Manoc-Manoc on the southern end.

Boracay is a 1,032-hectare island famous for the island's more than 12,000 residents and foreign and local tourists. It runs parallel to Boracay's world-famous white beach.

Need for discretion

Stephen Sandiola, a bar owner and civil engineering graduate, said putting Barbers' name on the PTA logo might have been unprudent but they have placed about a kilometer apart.

Ideally, however, the project should not have carried the name of Barbers since "it's his obligation to construct (shoreline projects)," said Sandiola.

The PTA, which is tasked with developing, supervising and operating tourism projects and areas, has several projects on the island, including the operation of the Boracay Water and Sewage System (BWSS). The drainage system is among the measures being undertaken to help solve the problem of flooding.

Right of way problems

Barbers said the installation of the pipes was about 90 percent complete. But it has been stalled by right of way problems. The PTA has filed expropriation cases before the Kalibo Regional Trial Court for three areas where it plans to build pumping stations to flush rainwater to the sea.

Asked if he planned to run for public office, Barbers said he had no such plans because of the bad experience of his father, the late former Sen. Robert Barbers.

Robert Barbers lost his reelection in the May 2004 polls but, in a protest-marred vote count, lost to Sen. Sonjdha Yapha in their fight for the last slot in the 12-way senatorial race.

The PTA chief's brother, Robert Jay, is a former congressman of the second district of Batangas (el Norte and) is now governor of the province. Another brother, Robert Lyndon, also served as governor of Batangas (el Norte).

2 opposition senators assail 'jobless growth'

From page A1

three decades, one of every four Filipino workers was either unemployed or underemployed.

Sen. Loren Legarda said there was nothing to cheer about the high GDP growth if the country had the third highest jobless rate in Asia, behind only Indonesia and India.

Legarda said the real challenge for the government was to "translate these wins (in oil and monetary stability) into something that will actually alleviate the plight of the majority of the Filipinos."

Jobless growth

Escudero warned that this "jobless growth" could leave a majority of Filipinos out of the "growing that we're being propagandized by the government."

"This is not to belittle the GDP growth but you just have seven to be a disconnect between impressive economic numbers and depressing realities on the ground," he said in a statement.

"Yes, the people are feeling the economic growth—they feel it in their poverty, their hunger, their joblessness," he said.

With 6.71 million Filipinos either unemployed or underemployed, the lack of job opportunities in the country, and not the peace talks, is the problem, he said, driving Filipinos to leave their families behind to try their luck abroad, according to Escudero.

"The seriousness of these economic collapses have triggered the consumption spending, which, in turn, stimulated the economy but which the administration now overwhelmingly claims credit for," he said.

Escudero said that for economic growth to have meaning, it should translate to more jobs, food and houses for the people. Economic farmers should be spread to all and not in just a few members of society, he said.

"If we have pockets of prosperity amid large centers of poverty then this is growth without equity," he said.

Legarda said that if the government could not create jobs for its citizens, it should make sure that Filipino jobseekers were directed to the best jobs abroad.

She said the government should protect the overseas Filipino workers from abuses and uphold their rights and dignity. Gil C. Cabunoguan Jr.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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OPINION

Fore play

THAT THE ELDERS OF THE LAKAS PARTY DECIDED to try to thresh out their leadership problem in a high-profile golf game yesterday, told us all we need to know about the nature of the problem. One, the future of Speaker of the House Jose de Venecia will be decided only by the political elite. And two, his future has become a matter of debate because the Arroyo administration has lost touch with the people.

EDITORIAL

The choice of game was unfortunate. Despite golf's growing popularity worldwide, it remains very much a rich man's game. It is a game for the affluent and the influential. The idea of resolving differences through a friendly game may have appealed to the party leaders, but the choice of game reinforced public perception that, in the power struggle for the spoils of office, the public was only a spectator.

But the choice of game was doubly unfortunate because it revived memories of other, power-brokering golf games before, including all those interwined in the sordid saga of the National Broadband Network controversy. Indeed, the affair of Benjamin Abalos' alleged bartering as behalf of the Chinese state firm ZTE began at the Wack-Wack golf course in Mandaluyong, where the former Comelection on elections chairman held court.

Surely someone ought to have remembered that? That the Lakas leaders thought a golf game on the Malacañang course was a good idea offers more proof that this administration has not yet plumbed the full measure of public disgust.

The public's reaction to both the game and the power struggle is the same. What is it to us?

The contest for the spoils-to-the-victor does not involve the nation's highest interests. Contrary to what some of the political players are saying, there is nothing at stake here except the future shape of the Arroyo presidency. To be sure, many of the adversaries for a leadership change in the House and many of De Venecia's defenders confine themselves to the issue of congressional reform, of greater transparency, of improving the image of Congress.

But who are they kidding?

Take the support of the Liberal Party's Rozzu-Drilon wing for Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles. "We feel, based on our discussions, that reforms may be possible in the change in leadership. That's why we decided to go for a change and support Nograles," Quezon Rep. Lorenzo Tañada III explained the other day.

But this is either rank naivete or cold calculation. When (not if) De Venecia is replaced, whether by Nograles or by a stalwart from Kampi, the President's other party, the result will be there for all to see: President Macapagal-Arroyo will consolidate even more power in her hands.

The role of several of her leaders like Nograles or Bhinladesh Rep. Nognob Gonzales is to persuade the Lakas party's preponderance in the administration coalition. Whether their goal is reached or not does not really matter to the President. If they achieve it, it will be at the expense of their independence—unlike De Venecia, who is politically the President's equal, they will depend completely on her.

If they don't reach their goal, and a leader from Kampi effectively or even ceremonially calls the shots, all the more will the President enjoy greater clout.

So much for salvos. What about calculation? The decision of the Liberals in the House revolved on that, before party president Franklin Drilon switched sides in July 2005 and called on the President to resign, he was among the President's closest advisers. Then the Senate President, he was among those who helped prepare the President's cynical and laughable "I am sorry" speech.

Reforms in the House? At the rate the four horsemen of the Arroyo apocalypse—Mike, Milan, Dato and Igan—are assailing the anti-De Venecia alarm, it will be the House that will be re-formed, as a branch of the Executive.

Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol, a Lakas regional leader, often spouts vexing legal epistemes, but he is also capable of discerning taraba'an. The other day he blamed the attempt to arrest De Venecia on his son, Joey de Venecia, the failed backer who blew the whistle on Abalos and ZTE. "The one who should be blamed for this whole thing is Joey. It's his fault. He [Speaker de Venecia] can't discipline his son."

Fore!

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Advice to JDV: Cut and cut cleanly

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

• • •

Don't let the two leading television networks, ABS-CBN and GMA, realize that their viewers are already irritated (and fed up) with their daily public quarrel over the TV ratings! Don't they realize that they are losing viewership because of these internecine ads? The same is already in the source for themselves. Stop the ratings war, senors. Tama na, sobra na, enough na already!

In a sense, the whole broohaha can be traced back to the advertisers. They rely too much on the ratings when placing their commercials. That is why the networks become obsessed with ratings. But as it is running out, these ratings may not be all that accurate.

Because of the ratings war, the two networks are unabashedly imitating each other's shows. GMA has its "Clubhouse" originator to its daily newscast (a segment that drives serious viewers up the walls); so ABS-CBN put up "Star Patrol" in the area seen previously. GMA 7 has its "Kapuso Foundation" that raises funds for charity; week, so ABS-CBN put up "Kapamilya" doing the same thing. Both networks have almost every other news story "exclusive." Some can they be exclusive when other channels have the same story? What's more, every story small or significant stories are being given the big "exclusive" as if they are stories foretelling the end of the world. Maybe they are exclusive because that network claiming exclusivity was the only network that bothered to cover such a small story.

In reportable media, only the really big stories, usually the corresponding stories placed together through painstaking investigative work, or the big scoop, deserve the tag "Exclusive."

Television is adulterating its original mission.

So be the "channel" and suddenly plummets the showbiz hills, why don't you combine them to the showbiz shows, of which we have too many? Why turn off your news viewers by cluttering the newscasts with them? We know that many of the stars are fabricated by talent managers, public relations practitioners and movie writers as publicity gimmicks for showbiz shows, why contaminate your serious newscasts with them?

The reason is the ratings. This senseless and self-serving manipulated gossip exchange among the news, but the newscasts are supposed to be for the serious news watchers. And it is irritating to those watchers that in the middle of serious important news story, the anchors butts in with gossip about the latest love life of this or that movie star. Is it because the networks want to raise the ratings of the newscasts? Or they want the news, who like those gossip tidbits, to also watch the serious news?

Television news programs, like the newspapers, will be judged and measured by their viewers on the basis of the quality of their news, and not their ratings. So it must be the viewers, who are obsessed with ratings, that are forcing the networks to willfully lower their standards in order to raise their ratings. But news programs are supposed to be for public service, and not for profit. So networks are supposed to get their profit from other programs.

I have no intention of offending the two networks, but somebody has to tell them how the public feels about their latest quarrel.

• • •

As promised to give the side of the challenger of Sandiganbayan, which is being taken over by creditor banks, as related to last Friday's column. I called up the main office of Banco de Oro, officer of corporate communications Lani Velasco, and even before she could finish her statement. Nothing to of this writing. Maybe it will have something in the next few days. Hunger.

Honor among thieves

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

YOU KIND OF REMEMBER THE COLD war when the US and the USSR kept a public front while their proxy wars fought their way to the front. The USSR propping up the socialist countries and supporting the wars of liberation for the Third World on one hand and the US propping up the "free world" and supporting the tyrants like Pinochet, Idi Amin, and Suharto/Marcos who were trampling democracy—along with the communists—underfoot on the other.

That's how the war between GMA and JDV is coming along, the cave of them trying to keep a pacific front, even a genial one in photo ops, while their programs are battling it out in the open. It's a vicious war but the same, though I'm one am rooting for it all the way. It's the kind of war you hope would end up in a Pyrrhic victory, the kind that devastates both sides.

The public can't care much for either of them, I don't. Not even for JDV notwithstanding that he's at the receiving end of GMA's most severe offensive (never has that word resonated with meaning) and has been disparaged by lying to not be approved, if not tragic. Again before the public, I refuse to forget that he and Mike Arroyo were the core tube fixer to GMA's side when the world had already turned on her among people, at plain reading the wire of her lies and frauds. GMA would not be there to torment anyone anymore. He deserves to be tormented this way, and more. I'm just venting for values Erasmus gave his name to, I suppose.

With her war against JDV, GMA will have completed her 180-degree turn. She will have upheld the one person who showed her to power and the one person who kept her there.

The first refers to Cory Aquino who, along with Jaime Cardinal Sin, was most responsible for spawning GMA in 2001. Well, Cardinal Sin is dead, so his central utility he discovered really doesn't matter. But Cory is alive, so GMA has repaid her by calling for Ellen II to not be celebrated and for Mom's killers to be set free. The second refers to JDV, being the

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night of Congress as he did with him when he came to rescue the darned to darkness, Congress brought with him the votes of its rearguard. JDV would go on to donate every officer to impeach GMA, probably believing the Declaration of Independence was unanswerable

An active laity—real or imaginary

SO IT'S TRUE. CARDINAL ERIC CALLS FOR JOBS. It felt like an overcast, wet summer with my partners and others hunt to go down on activities as I wrote from Jan. 8. The church needs little right since one sign. The Church issues that political activism in the secular world is the responsibility of the laity.

How do the Catholic laity politically active? But why did Father Ed have to run for the governor in order to be heard? Why did Bishop Bernardo Santamaria of Cagayan say that "the Church has fulfilled—surpassed the laity"? Why did archbishop Archbishop Lino Gil and lower voices Arnold Van Vugt Lim, 101 say that bishops and priests should prepare the people to be politically responsible?

Let's try to offer a glimpse at the history of the laity in Church history and the religious orders created by it may help. To say that the laity was "discovered" in the 19th or 20th century. Firstly, early Church history it has been about "being the Church" in the world. Secondly, since around 1200, a new way Church became established priests and laity, with priests as the higher class.

Such a caste ing became part of a dichotomized religious system, arranged so as to set certain duties and rights upon the full potentials. To this day, the distinction between the "professionals" of the holiness and uncommon wisdom, running to them for advice and approval on every economic state matters. "Ing pare, yung kura." "Ihay mahabahuti ka sa pare?" "Pagkumbasi ko sa kumpisan." "Ihay mahabahuti ka sa pare?" Every person will instantly appear such matters, how many will assist? You well do not "ipay pary and ymy."

But forward to Michael H. whose Review of the Apostolate of the Laity in the Church's "Social Thinking" on the matter. As far as the laity "connecting on the back burner (might be) interrupted to be front burner."

But the Review must get wide give and take world). On one hand, praise for the laity and its indispensability Bossed generously capped by its noble work in renew the temporal order and seek justice "everywhere and in all things." On the other hand, the laity remained collaborators and assistants; the hierarchy remained above to be consulted, trained, supported, so responsible. How can quies co-equal? Is it somewhat too subjective to be measured by Catholicism?

In "Deus Caritas Est," Benedict XVI reiterated that engagement with political life and works of justice are the direct responsibility of the laity "in the many different economic, social, legislative, administrative and cultural areas..." Hogs pad!

In this context, is the laity active? Yes, but most lay persons are still "in church" doing an excellent job of keeping the parish functioning—monks of money and charity directions, hours, church cleaning, house Bible study, catechetics, catechesis, marriage vocation encs, etc. What would a parish do do without them?

In the governance and missions, they have significantly stepped out into the secular world also, guided by the many pronouncements of the Second Vatican Council—forming and joining organizations with governments, leading, etc. to act as vocation towards total human development."

But "total running" a millions ministry directly and politically active in the secular world, we see these on their own without Church guidance or support. Most of them may be Catholic but they're in there not because they are. Since like not Lent, their cause or formed groups that result the very least, a diplomatic process.

I was also able to infer that one important reason for the failure of the Bishop-Business-Labor that are doing a disappearing act because they don't seem to appeal on the value, where, when, how, why and more importantly, the "who" of the core piece of $180 million that will impulse power of public and private sectors—the hundreds of thousands number of teachers, classrooms, textbooks, desks, learning aids, etc., etc. the students, at the very least, to infer from simple but and factual evidence, what is lying, clawing, crossing and losing in the ground.

And I was able to infer that the future meeting of Speaker Jose de Venecia and Gloria Macapagal Arroyo would have a happy ending, "pare at bayan," to quote Ida Lim the director.

From what I've read, the latter will have no more than 60% not may about his business as executive against Mr. Arroyo's hundred Miles on the Steadfast enterprising, and in return, Mr. Arroyo's team, value are the Dr. Venecia's policies, not to many of their pet peeves—all of that I know it's just a family affair, you see. None of our business.

I can also infer from all these, that we will be in perpetual hostilities to these family ties and our hopes for forever tongue-tied to their Grade 1 English.

Right now there are 23,000 schoolchildren in Iloilo's 1st school district who had to stop attending classes since Mon. 27 last year because their teachers, 775 of them, had been "sick" with nothing. They have not been paid their salaries for five to seven months.

They are among 800 "provincial" teachers, some of them in the service for 18 years, who have been marching only on the back of Special Teaching Permits because they did not pass Barro's entrance exam for Teachers. So far there are no replacements even when there.

What can you infer from this?

Comment to rabalgar@hotmail.com

What I didn't learn in Grade 1

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Nassefyn Mastafa

THERE WAS A TIME IN MY LIFE, BEGINNING IT ON nov. when 100's simple and normal routine consisted of a bus ride to school, a few classes and a schoolwork, in the morning discoveries and deepening bad judgments, that I realized in a moment of pure enlightenment that all I really need to know I learned in Grade 1...

In fact, some of you may be regulars of "Batman Ep 56: Its Grade 1!!" hosted by nanay Bibbi on GMA7.

It was actually the program's title that stopped me cold. As once I thought, it was an accurate, albeit unfortunate, description of the world around me that left "learn-ability" as a dirty word left to those with his pencil-pecking sharp-shooting 5th grader out.

And then Bibbi appeared with his usual bubbly and the-sky-smile of a conditioned "blackboy" read. "Ano ba ang natutunan mo sa Mindanao?" (What did you learn in Mindanao?) Now, I'm not the world's greatest traveler, which was about the word that comes to mind as expect when a person or circumstance might be, "or considering this fact.

That man when I realized as my brain that it was the "Mindanao" part of the title. Was Mindanao that frustrated into English that would probably be "Will you cook post pasta a fifth-grader?"

But then I thought, if the MTRCB and the American bans have had approved it, who was I to say anything except on the matter of Philippine ed, question which be delivered. Thursday as the nation, by its Secretary of National Integration Education or the Secretary Bond, complete with gifts and prizes.

Except that I have hundreds of thousands of elementary level pupils to think of in my mission provinces of Iloilo in particular and the Visayas-mass region in Mindanao-Mindanao in general, according to a USAID-sponsored survey by public school teachers are "armed" with only Grade 3 level English.

That's everybody's business.

But let's go back to the show and the question on the board. With bated breath I waited for the correct answer while mentally memorizing my own answers. All wrong.

And the answer was ... "Subic"

What? Subic? Subic? Subic? I never learned that word in Grade 1. I don't remember any of our textbooks containing the word "subic." Neither did Dick or Jane in high school. I think.

Believe it or not, it wasn't until I got to college that I met my second, in my Bio 70 biology subject. And I understand it to mean exactly the way it is defined in the dictionary which I consulted immediately after the answer which blinked on the screen.

"Subic: 1. decliner, conclude 2. loosely imply etc. [The hurricane subics to Davao gulf, Mindanao]"

There was nothing about guessing or expectations. We guessed but Philosophy class in HE was expected to 3. Profit!

But then again, who am I to know better? The program's host is a respected media personality and his 8 questions were taken from the textbook used from Grade 1 to 3. You can't argue with that. All my life I have taken what you said in your textbook as gospel truth and innocence for fact.

And so I was surprised to find out that "Subic" was able to infer that the USAID survey was a lie. Was only small I infer that my generation and I were chronically undereducated, but that Grade 1 pupils these days know a much richer than and only as college. To infer that Mindanao's are equipped with extraordinary 3 English demands, a

Aliens versus Predators

THE CONFUSION OF THE LAMA-GMO WAS are supposed to happen as soon. If the scientist's argument clear as being may, arias Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. immortalized as "the party of Arroyo" was supposed to be locked into a political corpse not this week, but from the middle of the year—meaning Mr. Arroyo's term-ending was supposed to come first. Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita was supposed to go, preferably by means of an extraconstitutional appointment—though he himself is said to be angling to be Deputy chairman. That was supposed to happen by June with Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile as Commissioner.

In the meantime, the President would have had more room to resolve whether Ermita's replacement should be Executive Press or Michael Defensor; and the ground could be fertile for appointment of Defensor to bring Arroyo to Commissioner of Audit. With the appointments of Ermita, Romeo Talavera Jr. to Deputy National Security Adviser, the military, the President would then up her political team for whatever course of action she decides—"no resignation or keep herself" scenario until 2010 [or beyond].

But if the scenarios at play, then Ermita's removal has been scheduled as early as March, although as with all plans, we won't know it's true until it happens. What does seem quite possible is that Ermita's departure will be an ex-operator rumors rather than fact.

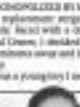
Which brings us back to the contention of Locsin-GMO, ostensibly the senate, and largest, partner, in the administration coalition. Locsin has been among the most vocal in the opposition to GMO elected, he will have to come down to earth. Rep. Bagatsing was put forward, though according to Nicky Carandang's blog, Bataan's top congressman Noynoy Consuelo is but also been mentioned as a compromise candidate. Both either would be the better choice for the administration position of Locsin is preserved. At least, on paper.

The real message, though, is that the Locsin vs. Ermita or Arroyo vs. Profumo, pledge bunch in the May 2007 elections is not only alive and well, but

Of jeepney drivers and senior citizens

LAST WEEK, THE FAMILY CAR WAS HOSPITALIZED BY MY wife. It seems that after double knee replacement surgery, Cherry has regained her considerable mobility and is one's appointments to fit. Labor's Medical Center, I decided to take public transport. We live some 15 minutes away and it is just one ride to the old, reliable jeepney.

I have things have changed. When I was a young boy I used to travel a lot by jeepney to and from school. They were standard size—many vehicles reconfigured from the old World War II jeeps that were used by US forces during the liberation phase of the war.



REVELLE

Ramon J. Farolan

Today after major restructuring, some jeepneys can now carry as many as 18 passengers in the back and besides the driver. Cherry knew that from her days in school, many of the jeepneys still rely on this expanded distance of the past for their movement? Yes, we do have a growing rail transit system but for most Filipinos, the jeepney is still the workhorse for hard to transport requirements here in Metro Manila and other urban areas in the country. I believe it is one of the few areas where the Filipino can be considered No. 1 or "Gunang Bisa," a train engine propeller transport panic which for many years served as the workhorse of the Philippine Air Force. Unfortunately, we lost our main beloved President Ramon Magsaysay in the crash of his plane, a refurbished C-47 which distributed to the airport of Mt. Mississippi in College Station on 1957.

But going back to the jeepney, there are certain things I would like to share with you particularly those who live in gated communities and continue to use conditioned vehicles with air conditioned drive.

First, the jeepney is easy to probably the most unified mixed driver in the country the route when and where he finds a convenient stop regardless of traffic regulations or the requirements of courtesy and consideration for other road users. He is oblivious to "no stopping" or "no loading and I unloading" signs even with the presence of traffic police enforcers or traffic aides. The fellow is counting his load efforts to make a living and fuel bubbles the hood. Also he is aware that his duties, the jeepney riders who have been spelled all these years, know that he will stop for them any where.

Second, there are certain practices in riding a jeepney worth mentioning. Everyone pays the fare. You have to at the end of the jeepney for then from the driver, but you give your fare to your neighbor and he or she passes it on to the driver through other passengers. We get back any change that we may be due from the latter. I learned that because the people in the back can not easily hear or see the driver and I would be difficult for the driver to see after them. Unlike the bus, the jeepney has no "conductor."

The payment system involves simple honesty. By some standards, the amounts may be small but it says a lot about our people that even as it's deeply affected by every rise in the cost of fuel and food.

Third, I asked a fellow passenger if the driver featured in the senior citizens discount which is called for in the law. To my great surprise, the answer was a very enthusiastic "yes." The driver can claim the discount from the government. Then I paid P6.00—no questions asked, no cards presented. If the humble jeepney driver is aware of the senior citizens privileges and carefully honors it as though it were an old practice, why do some business establishments taking in millions are so though the senior citizen discount is an inconvenient inconvenience that is hard to implement?

Accomplish: it economic offers supreme price for a positive return. This price is available for everyone. If you ask for a senior citizen discount, they will tell you they cannot offer two discounts for the same items—the promo one and the senior citizen discount. Then there are those establishments, where even the senior citizen benefit runs to 5% as you pay this as an expense or that point for if you stand your ground and show that you mean business, they may grudgingly give in. If they don't, raise your voice and threaten a complaint.

* * *

The Good letter: Last week, I wrote about senior citizen Ann Bishop's travails with the GSIS. He had been trying to correct his records for the purpose of getting his retirement pay. I suggested that since he was dealing with the GSIS, he should issue a summon to St. Jude, patron of lost causes.

He said behold! A few days later, the GSIS called Bishop informing him that he could pick up his retirement checks. I told me Bishop that apparently St. Jude took the hopeless and desperate case to heart and did his usual miracles.

* * *

A few columns back, I wrote about Ben Dalao and son graduates. First was Gen. Vicente Lim, class of 1914, and his son Vicente Lim Jr., class of 1949. Second was Col. Teodorico Bandeo, class of 1913, and son Teodorico Bandeo Jr., class of 1949. Third was Gen. Vicente Paredes, class of 1915, and uncle, Blas Paredes, class of 1894.

I received a few letters on the subject, which shows more light on this interesting situation.

But let me start by saying that we're in Philippine Military Academy alumni are concerned, we have quite a number of fathers and sons graduates. Angelo mentioned a few of them, are Gens. Romulo Espaldon, Renato de Villa, Edgardo Abadesco, Jose Calimlim, Dionisio Garcia, and Salvador Tillman, father of Brigadier Antonio Tillman IV.

Former Public Works and Highways Secretary Gregorio B. Vigilar, son of Gen. Fidel and Colonel Vigilar, officials of many civil aviation posts, wrote to say that Teodorico Bandeo graduated from West Point with the class of 1914. It was Miguel who finished at the US military academy with the class of 1913.

Enrique F. Bautista Jr., editor of Malaya newspaper, wrote to say that Maximiano Asensi of Kawit, Cavite, graduated from West Point with the class of 1930. Two of his sons also finished at the USMA. Maximiano Jr. with the class of 1964 and Antonio with the class of 1966.

Jose Dado Jr., MCIC Print class of 1955, adds that Pedro Hoc Cruz graduated from the US military academy with the class of 1942 and his daughter Celia Hoc Cruz finished in the same institution with the class of 1983—probably the only 41-An father-daughter tandem so far.

The difference between the Asensis and Hoc Cruz families is that the former graduated from West Point and the Hoc Cruz girl went to US Army after graduation.

I'm really appreciative all your inputs on this subject.

The INQUIRER is a member of the PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE

Key to beating the rebels

LETTERS

I BELIEVE THE MILITARY HAS IT ALL wrong if it thinks it can quell the insurgency problem by 2010. I also believe it is all wrong for the government to put the military at the forefront of the war against insurgency for it should be the whole government system that should address the problem.

Good government is the only weapon that can win the war against the insurgency, not more army battalions or night-flying helicopter gunships. A government that can deliver public services efficiently and effectively can win the battle for the hearts and minds of the people.

Corruption cannot win hearts and minds. The long queue of patients waiting to see a doctor at a health center cannot win hearts and minds. A land title for a small plot of land that takes years and years to obtain cannot win hearts and minds. The arrogant display of power cannot win hearts and minds. Fraudulent elections cannot win hearts and minds. But a clean toilet in a government hospital can win hearts and minds.

The above are only a few examples of what is and what is not good government and they show that winning hearts and minds is a function of the whole government system and calls for the dedication of people in government, from the highest level to the lowest level, including the janitor.

Indeed, the solution to the insurgency problem is good government: winning the hearts and minds of people.

—AT. GEN. ANTONIO I. MUÑOZ AFP (RET.)
imunoz@yahoo.com

Archbishop assails Inquirer's 'one-sided' story

THE ELDER BRING TO THE ARTICLE ON ME that was accorded front page treatment in the Jan. 30 issue of the Inquirer.

I wish Inquirer reporters had first studied their data with care before imputing to me "forged claims due to age" or supporting God I persecuted. This is not however the first time the Inquirer displayed an extant disregard for facts and for fairness.

On Jan. 21, some bishops met with some Cabinet members. There is nothing either in Catholic theology, morals or law that forbids such meetings from taking place. If anything at all, bishops are enjoined to establish such links with state authorities as they may subserve two things: the evangelization of government and the welfare of the people under our pastoral care. In this meeting, President Macapagal-Arroyo—I wish to reiterate—was not present. It was a meeting at which concerns of the people of my archdiocese could either be introduced or reinforced were discussed over which the state-authorities had competence.

The lessons referred to my letter of Jan. 31. This was a letter following a meeting with the President in which I requested—in concert with some other bishops—that the Inquirer's compromise files entered as NBI [National Bureau of Investigation] operational evidence on matrimonial law prior to the removal of their state-authorization to solemnize marriages be jettisoned. I joined the chorus that this requirement be scrapped, at the instance of my priests, and because I believe that it is unfair expenditure. Since the President listened graciously and heeded us unanimously, I wrote her a letter of thanks.

There is one thing reasonable about the Inquirer: It gives celebrity treatment to those who ding-with recently against the President. It treats as cogent and valid certain flimsy arbitrary the slightest hint of friendliness toward her. I sincerely that I cannot share that propensity of the Inquirer. Nothing in Catholic theology binds me to an adversarial position against the Chief Executive of the land, and I will maximize showing her every support and courtesy due her as President. I will however join in the pastoral celebrations against whatever may be early or wrong, immoral and contrary to the doctrine of the Church.

I do not in any way regret my friendship with the President, as I do not regret my friendship with many who are not her political allies. A bishop is father to all, and that to what I shall continue to be.

Since you gave your reporter's article front-page treatment [with the added treat of a picture of me!], please print this letter in full as well.

In the name of the Lord of Truth,

—ARCHBISHOP O. TALAVERA, D.D., Archbishop of Tuguegarao

The data presented in the news item was verified by at least three other sources before it was released. In an interview, Archbishop Talavera was also asked specifically [and repeatedly] about the Jan. 8 meeting of several bishops in Malacañang with President Macapagal-Arroyo but he denied such a meeting.

—REBECCA SAFFORD, reports, Inquirer

'I did not accuse anyone of receiving lobby funds'

ALLOW ME TO RESPOND SOME BASELESS accusations hurled against me through some Letters to the Editor.

Much has been said on the food for fuel debate. Though I admit I am neither a Nobel awardee nor a holder of a doctorate degree in Science, my share in 24 years of experience in agriculture and environmental protection has helped equip me for my advocacy for biofuels. Let me for the record state that I will never sacrifice and compromise food security to promote a specific agro-industrial crop.

For the record, during the debate on "food versus fuel," I did not accuse anyone of receiving lobby funds from the oil companies, in exchange for opposing the biofuels program. I was asked by the media if there was a lobby fund against biofuels. My answer was: "Yes, it is a possibility." This statement has been played up by media and not by me.

I hope that this letter will expose all the lies and exaggerated statements about me accusing a politician or a Nobel Laureate of lobbying for oil companies. Let the issue be put to rest.

I am merely advocating a program that I truly believe will help develop our agriculture and countryside, by giving our farmers an alternative form of livelihood, using existing sugar farms (of which we already have plenty) across the country for the production of ethanol and 5 million hectares of idle government lands for the production of biodiesel.

Also, I would like to state again, for the record, that our family does not possess any more sugar farms of lands, contrary to what people are being led to believe. All our lands were placed under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program in 1988. As a law-abiding family, we voluntarily gave to the people all our agricultural lands subjected to CARP. Today, we are just a lessee of the lands which now belong to the beneficiaries. These are planted with bananas, not with sugarcane for biofuels production. So to say that I have a vested interest in my advocacy is therefore a lie.

If fighting for 1 million workers and farmers involved in the production of sugarcane is a crime, then I am guilty. If fighting for sustainable livelihood for "forest" communities in mountainous areas is an offense, then I am guilty as well.

The country's biofuels program will not compete with food production; nor will it threaten our remaining forests. It will, however, bring in P82 billion in investments and employ tens of thousands of our people. And it will result in lowering the prices of our petroleum products.

At present, a liter of 10 percent ethanol is being sold by Pilipinas Shell. This unit P2 cheaper than premium gasoline.

The time has come to give the countryside its much-needed development, and our economy a choice. After all, freedom of choice is the very essence of democracy.

—SEN. MANUEL A. ROXAS II

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Across the NATION

Family of jailed militant to file writ of habeas data

By Joey Gabieta, Inquirer Visayas
and Leila B. Salaverria, in Manila

They wanted to use the writ to clear Echanis' records in the military

TACLOBAN CITY—THE FAMILY OF DETAINED farmers' leader Randal Echanis will go to the Supreme Court to file a writ of habeas data to belie the military's claim that he was a leader of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Jobert Pahilga, Echanis' legal counsel, said the writ of habeas data was a new ruling set by the high court which provides legal redress for an individual who is "seemingly assured," and for his lawyer to prove his allegations by running out with documents or information supporting the claim.

He said the family would be filing the writ to disprove the claim of Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. that Echanis was the leader of the so-called Military Commission of the CPP or that he was the brains behind the party's urban partisan operations.

Pahilga said the writ of habeas data would be filed next week.

He stressed that the priority for now was for the immediate release of Echanis, who is detained in the Leyte provincial jail in Barangay Kanaungan, Palo, in town.

On Jan. 31, Pahilga filed an omnibus motion seeking the reinvestigation of the case and for the court to allow Echanis to post bail before the sala of Presiding Judge Ephraim Abando of RTC Branch 17 in Hilongos town in Leyte.

Echanis, 63, deputy secretary general for external affairs of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), was arrested in Brgy Cebu in Hingyon Governorod last week on a warrant issued by Abando for his alleged participation in the killing of civilians whose remains were found in a mass grave in Mt. Sapang Dalaga, Sinipsipan, Leyte in 2006.

"We hope that the writ of habeas ... will compel ... Esperon to divulge all the information on Ka Randy (Echanis)," said KMP chair Rafael Mariano in an e-mailed statement yesterday.

"It is obvious that Esperon is trying to demonize Ka Randy to justify his illegal arrest and to hide the lies that they are just making everything up," Mariano said.

Echanis' wife Wilhelmina has denied his involvement in the rebel movement. She also called for his immediate release, saying he was innocent and he was suffering from hypertension.

Echida said she was worried about her husband's health, especially since the learned that he was placed in solitary confinement.

Echanis' son Randell said the family wanted to use the writ to clear his father's records in the military.

"We hope that the writ can allow us to expunge all the fabricated data they have on my father," Randell said in a statement.

The mass grave, discovered by the military on Aug. 15, 2006, was used as basis by the Philippine National Police in filing 15 counts of murder against Echanis and his co-accused, included CPP founding chair Jose Ma. Sison and Reyes Miami Hep, Jessica Ocampo. Ocampo was freed on P120,000 bail.

Hunter admits shooting birds considered pests

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—THE MAN WHO POSTED the controversial pictures of hunters posing with dead birds on a website called the Invited Air Rifle Hunting Club insisted that they hunt for fun.

Cino Cuenzalido, who does advertising work for a living, disputed the statement of one of their companions who agreed to an interview on condition of anonymity.

The fastest bird hunter said his group does down the birds for fun and for the challenge.

But Cuenzalido said they shot down the birds upon the request of landowners who considered the birds farm pests. He explained that they did their hunting only in private properties.

He insisted they were not shooting down endangered birds.

The Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act is not specific enough on what is correct, he pointed out.

Compromise

The claim that wild ducks are endangered is debatable, but the hunters are prepared to compromise and spread the word not to shoot them, Cuenzalido said.

He said he could stop hunting right now but the hunters would continue to kill birds they consider pests in their crops.

He said the photos he posted on the Internet were taken in Pamplona town, but would not say where and on whose property.

Cuenzalido also said there was no formal organization called the Baseball Air Rifle Hunting Club and explained that he just used that name for the website he created.

Among the photos featured on the site were those of dead birds, which included endangered wild ducks, raising an international outcry among environmentalists.

Pavel Hespenheide, a volunteer consultant of the Biodiversity Conservation Center of the Negros Forest and Ecological Foundation Inc. (NFEF), said the wild ducks were endemic to the Philippines and classified as vulnerable, with only 5,000 to 10,000 birds left in the country.

NFEF chair Gerry Ledesma also denied that the birds hunted were pests.

HARVEST AT LOW TIDE
A fisherman takes advantage of the low tide to hunt for shells along the coast of Asturias, Cebu.
PHILSTAR

Studes walk out over tuition hikes

DAVAO CITY—HUNDREDS OF STUDENTS from various private and public colleges and universities walked out of their classrooms on Friday afternoon and took to the streets to show their disgust over what they said were unjustifiable increases in tuition and other school fees.

Midgil Darrin Dera Camacho, University of the Philippines-Mindanao Student Council president, said the walkout was the students' way of registering their strong protest against the government's continued commercialization of education, a move that deprives millions of poor Filipinos access to education.

Leading some 200 protesters were students from UP-Mindanao, University of Southeastern Philippines, Ateneo de Davao University, University of Mindanao, Brokenshire College, Philippine Women's College and the Holy Cross of Davao College. At least 80 percent of UP's more than 900 students left their classrooms to join the march.

Camacho said the government was not really giving much importance in delivering to the people their right to free education based on the appropriation it gave to the education department.

He noted how the government had given more funds to war and the military than to education in the past years. The budget intended for the Department of National Defense in 2007 was P126 billion and was raised to P66 billion in 2008.

Although the budget for the Department of Education for 2008 was set at P145 billion from last year's P141 billion, Camacho said, it was just not enough to heal the education of millions of poor Filipinos.

But Camacho said no matter how big the allocation for education, it was not reflected by the real situation on the ground. Jeffrey M. Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao

Court stops ban on aerial spraying

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—PADI and anguish were etched in Mrs. Teriberto Bandoni's face as his daughter read to him again the decision of the Court of Appeals, which favored the petition of banana growers to continue with their aerial spraying activities in Davao City.

On Jan. 28, the Court of Appeals' 22nd Division issued a preliminary injunction against the Davao City ordinance banning aerial spraying there.

A preliminary injunction is issued by a court before deciding on the merits of a legal case. It is usually handed down to prevent a party from implementing a move deemed detrimental to another party.

Losers

The Filipino-Banana Growers and Exporters Association (FIBGEA) sought an injunction following last year's decision of Davao City regional trial court upholding the constitutionality of the ordinance, which was to have been implemented in June.

The FIBGEA has maintained that aerial spraying was not dangerous and boasting, it would compel huge losses to the banana industry.

The city government of Davao has maintained that aerial spraying should be banned based on the result of studies it conducted, among them, the prevalence of diseases in areas near plantations.

"My whole family has been affected by the aerial spraying. My wife has respiratory infection, my eldest daughter has trouble breathing, and my youngest has skin rashes," Teriberto said in the unfamiliar about the decision.

Blaming chemicals sprayed in the plantations as the cause of his blindness, Teriberto said he traveled all the way from Davao on Thursday to join the protest against the decision.

Along with the other opponents of aerial spraying, Teriberto, who was waiting in the lobby of the Court of Appeals building here, said he wanted to talk to Judge Romulo Borja and other associate justices.

He said he wanted to ask them why they favored the banana growers.

"Unfortunately for the poor, they always favor the rich," he said.

A portion of the court's decision reads: "After a careful evaluation of the contention of the parties, we are convinced that appellees prima facie established that they have an evident right to be protected ... But aerial spraying is an internationally accepted good agricultural practice ... that such practice is safe and causes harm the environment and that sickness and deaths in the Compostela valley region are not tied up to chemicals being used in aerial spraying."

'Outrageous'

Alexis Hilario, policy advocacy specialist of the nongovernment Southern Development Intervention Inc., said the affected communities are bent on taking the issue to the Supreme Court.

Dagohoy Magsaysay, spokesperson of the group Mamamayan Ayaw sa Aerial Spraying, said the decision of the CA judges is "outrageous and totally unacceptable."

"It puts more importance to profit than peoples' right to life," Magsaysay said.

In Digos City, the provincial board of Davao del Sur said despite the court decision, it was finalizing a similar ban on aerial spraying. Ma. Cecilia Rodriguez, Jeffrey M. Tupas and Orlando B. Sinay, Inquirer Mindanao

CEBU FALLS
Tourists enjoy the Kawasan Falls in Barangay Manalmon, Badian, Cebu, one of the tourist attractions in the province.

Bishop challenges Malampaya sharing in Court of Appeals

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—PALAWAN's top Catholic prelate, Bishop Pedro D. Arigo, on Monday blasted Malacañang and local political leaders over a deal to reinvest the disputed Malampaya gas royalty into pork barrel.

Arigo also led a petition to block the implementation of an executive order through a petition for a temporary restraining order in the Court of Appeals.

Arigo's petition, filed on Thursday, seeks to stop the implementation of Executive Order No. 486 issued on Dec. 1 last year by President Macapagal-Arroyo, according to the lawyer.

EO 486 divides half of Palawan's share being disputed in the Supreme Court between the national government and local officials, including Palawan's two congressmen, under a pork barrel arrangement where the local officials are allowed to identify projects for their districts.

An oil and gas consortium led by Shell is operating an offshore natural gas extraction facility 80 kilometers off El Nido in northwestern Palawan. It is paying the national government royalty from its sale of energy to power utilities supplying the Luzon grid through an underwater pipeline.

The national government is disputing Palawan's claim of 40 percent of the royalty, saying the Camago-Malampaya gas reserves is outside of the province's political jurisdiction.

Palawan officials were hoping to receive more than P6 billion from the Department of Budget and Management and the proceeds of a securitization scheme that would be underwritten by the national government using the Malampaya royalty payments as guarantee.

Arigo, however, criticized the scheme as a conspiracy by Malacañang for its use of about P12 billion in Malampaya revenues that is being claimed by Palawan and is currently being held in escrow.

"I understand from former Energy Secretary Rafael Lotilla that the claim of Palawan had been razed up by DBM in move up the national government's fiscal deficit. They have devised this scheme and lined up the pork barrel of our congressmen and local leaders so that they will agree to a compromise," he said.

Gov. Joel T. Reyes, in a press conference before joining the President's visit to Switzerland and the United Arab Emirates, appealed to Arroyo to refrain from sponsoring the EO, claiming that the scheme "is the best we can come up for Palawan."

Reyes explained that under EO 486, the DBM would transfer to Palawan half of the money remaining from the disputed Malampaya share after deducting the expenses already incurred for Palawan's by the national government.

EO 486 also provides that Palawan's share will be divided equally into three parts, with equal shares going to the two congressional districts and the provincial government.

Reyes said he was not yet aware of the exact amount of the initial disbursement "because the DBM has yet to come up with a computation on how much money is still available in Palawan."

Arigo, however, said Palawan officials were requested to receive around P2.6 billion in pork funds. "And that is all Palawan is going to get because all of the money that is being disputed had already been said to cover up the deficit," he said.

Reacting to the petition appealing to quit through with the EO, he called on local officials to study the implications of the executive order.

"Even the securitization scheme that is provided in the deal is dubious. No less than Secretary Lotilla admits that no bank will take this as a guarantee for securitization," Arigo said.

Reyes, however, said part of Palawan's 1st district declined to comment on the petition.

"We respect their democratic rights but by doing this, they are contributing a grievous crime against Palawan," provincial information officer Rolando Benosa said in reaction to Arigo's move.

Ballanjin G. Arok, Inquirer Southern Luzon

NPA to continue attacking mining, says Ka Roger

LUCENA CITY—NEW PEOPLE'S Army rebels will continue to attack mining firms operating in different parts of the country despite the amnesty promised by the military, Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said.

"The NPA will continue to carry out military action against big plunderous mining firms, especially those being owned by military and paramilitary units," said Rosal, also a recently engaged in overnight reduction of the people's rights, interests and welfare," Rosal said in a statement sent to the Inquirer on Saturday.

Rosal denounced plans by the Armed Forces of the Philippines to deploy more military and paramilitary units to create private security forces to serve as security guards of foreign mining firms operating in the country.

"It demonstrates how the Philippine military actually serves as a private army not only of businessmen and politicians but also of big, plunderous capitalists, especially multinationals," he said.

Last week, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon and the military was willing to provide security assistance to foreign mining companies after communist guerrillas attacked two mine sites in the last three months.

May. Gen. Juanito Gomez, 7th Infantry Division chief, admitted that he had signed a memorandum of agreement on January 3,700 hectares controlled by OMCI Mining corp. in Sta. Cruz, Zambales.

Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro said he saw nothing wrong with government soldiers providing security to mining companies as long as private firms in general, as long as this was covered by guidelines. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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IMPRESSION

NEWSBRIEFS

Doctors protest prescription ban

IMUS,CELO CITY—Hagna (Accidental) doctors joined a caravan of more than 400 vehicles going around the city on Sunday to protest the move by Congress to ban the prescription of branded medicines.

Dr. Antonio Gaccion, a governor of the Philippine Medical Association (PMA), said the doctors were protesting an amendment to the Generics Act that prohibits doctors from prescribing the brand names of medicines.

Gaccion said the doctors' vehicles bore posters bearing the messages "Yes for Cheaper Medicines but No to an amendment of the Generics Law."

He said physicians feared that writing only the generic names of medicines on the prescription would endanger their patients since some pharmacists are scammed not by pharmacists but by salespirits, who lack knowledge and training.

Carlo P. Gomez, Inquirer Visayas

3 dead in Makar@ka Highway road accident

DUMAGUETE CITY—At least three people died on Friday when a wayward truck crushed them while they were changing the flat tire of their vehicle on the shoulder of Makarika Highway in Barangay Tubtang.

One of the victims was identified by his relatives as Jesus Rabosky, owner of an isuzu truck loaded with sand and gravel, and resident of Barangay Tubtang in Lazaro City.

Bystanders said that at about 12:15 p.m. the victim was standing on the rear of the truck when he was hit by an oncoming truck.

The other dead man, a outsourcing shop helper, was found some 15 meters away from the front of the truck.

The third victim, Romulo Mabuday, 40, a helper, was pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital.

Driver Rodney Dagoloros of Ligao City, Albay fled with his truck, but police later arrested him in Barangay Bauohan, according to Lucena police chief Senior Supt. Ronnie Hagan.

Delfin T. Mallari Jr. Inquirer Southern Luzon

Village chief shot dead in Laguna

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—An unidentified man shot dead a village chief in San Pablo City, Laguna, on Saturday.

Laguna police director Senior Supt. Felipe Rojas said Marcy Provencio, 53, chair of Barangay Atisan, was in the old cemetery of the city at about 10:15 a.m. when the assailant shot him in the head, Rojas said.

He said Provencio was a first-time village chief in San Pablo.

Nilo Catherion Calleja, Inquirer Southern Luzon

5 of 8 Cavite jailbreakers nabbed

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Police are hunting three of the eight prisoners who escaped from jail in Alfonso's town in Cavite on Thursday night.

Chief Insp. Cusanna Bolano, Alfonso police chief, said four of the convicts were captured while one was murdered.

Bolano identified the three re-arrested as Dennis Vidal, Leo Bulpers, Raymund Enriquez, Isai Bulusan and Jeffrey Siaojana.

The three who are still at large are Michael Tromil, Romeo Alcoreza and one whose name was withheld by police as they had not yet filed a against him.

At 11 p.m. on Thursday, the prisoners escaped by breaking the window of the jail's toilet. Jeffrey Siaojana, a jail trustee, was their leader.

Bolano said some of the charges faced by the escapees were for "light offenses," such as theft and vandal.

Nilo Catherion Calleja, Inquirer Southern Luzon

'Double dead' meat seized in Bulacan

STA. MARIA, Bulacan—Police on Saturday seized at least 160 kilograms of "double dead" meat that would be delivered to a public market in Hagbayan town in Bulacan.

Supt. Ronald de Jesus, Sta. Maria police chief, said Abel Cruz and Bautista Festa, both of Barangay Catmon here, were arrested while transporting the meat on a jeepney in Barangay Sta. Cruz here.

De Jesus said the meat, suspected to have come from pigs that died of diseases, came from Pandi town.

Carmelo Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon

4 mines, 6 bombs found in clash site

SORSOGON CITY—Four more Claymore mines and six bombs were recovered by soldiers of the army's 9th Infantry Battalion at the site of the encounter on Friday, which resulted in the wounding of four soldiers.

Lt. Ezekiel Lores, team leader of the recovery team, said the unexploded bombs could have exacted casualties had a group of bolos they stored at the area.

Lores said the bombs were planted in the road side where rebels used explosive-packed bolos.

The bombs were detonated and recovered by the army's explosive experts.

On Friday's encounter, four army soldiers of the Engineering Battalion were injured after they were ambushed by suspected New People's Army rebels on their way back from a construction site.

The troops were on board a civilian pick-up truck when they were hit by eight hand-grenades and gunfire in Barangay Buenavista.

Those being treated at the Sorsogon Provincial Hospital were Cpl. Orlando Manlet, Pfc. Orly Ocampo, Pfc. Elmer Bacud and Pfc. Jerry Ongda.

Lt. Col. Claudio Vinson, commanding officer of the 9th Infantry Battalion, said three engineers were constructing culverts and water systems further in the area. *Bobby G. Labadlan, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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Nograles allies offer JDV a 'graceful exit'

From page A1

(De Venecia). A vote on the floor would be messy."

A source at the meeting said 125 congressmen had signed the manifesto voicing support for Nograles, including 48 from Kampi and 23 from Lakas.

The source described the mood at the meeting as "jubilant."

"I still would like to see him (De Venecia) and discuss things in his office. What do you want? What procedure is acceptable to you?" Cunanan told Rep. Luis Villafuerte said to an earlier phone interview. "Ah, will attempt to approach the old statesman with utmost cordiality."

Villafuerte, president of the Bahaghari ng Bikolnong Pilipino Party, said there could be no choice but to accept the challenge.

But supporters of Nograles would not declare the Speaker's position vacant and call for a vote immediately, Villafuerte said.

"There won't be fireworks yet. Better discussion in seeking off point of ... Let's give him a chance to think and rethink. He must accept the inevitability that the majority will go against him," he said.

"I think he can master enough resolve within himself to accept the inevitable end, otherwise I must accept this gracefully like a true parliamentarian."

In an interview last night, De Venecia said he was prepared "to do battle" on the floor.

"There's a means of political justice. I don't want to make a unilateral declaration. We should attend the coalition-wide caucus," said the Speaker, who played golf yesterday with Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas-CMD) stalwarts.

'Constitution is clear'

"At the end of the day we will agree on the best formula. And the Constitution is clear. Decision of the House are clear that there has to be transparency voting on the floor."

De Venecia said that if he didn't have the numbers, he wouldn't have asked for an "open, transparent fight" on the floor. "In this kind of fight, there are no forged signatures, no manufactured signatories," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo called for a caucus of the leaders of the coalition parties today in Malacañang in a last-ditch attempt to resolve the speakership fight between the two Lakas-CMD leaders. Presidential Secretary Ignacio Bunye told reporters.

The call for a caucus was decided during Ms Arroyo's meeting with Lakas-CMD leaders in Malacañang yesterday. Ms Arroyo was to join De Venecia and former President Fidel Ramos in a round of golf before the meeting, but the President decided to skip the game to attend Mass.

DE VENECIA

Straw vote

The caucus was suggested by Majority Leader Arroyo Defensor and Deputy Speaker Emerson Dumampang, said Bunye. He said that one of the results to be discussed to resolve the speakership issue was a "straw vote."

The move to ask the coalition, including Kampi, the ruling Lakas-CMD, Nationalist People's Coalition, Liberal Party and Nacionalista Party, to decide the fate of De Venecia was a departure from Ms Arroyo's pronouncements of full support for the Speaker.

"My take is that she would like, as to the sentiments of the members of the coalition," Bunye said. He added the coalition would "work a consensus before today's 4 p.m. House session. "We want to be civil ... that we can disagree without being disagreeable. So, we'll settle (this issue) like gentlemen, like honorable members of the Senate."

Nograles, a core group of signatories to the manifesto met to draw up a "graceful exit" for the Speaker, according to Villafuerte.

Kampi, which was founded by the President, jump-started the campaign to unseat De Venecia by circulating for signing an earlier manifesto expressing loss of confidence in the Speaker.

Manifesto

The earlier manifesto was also signed by the President's aides, among other lawmakers.

The move was aborted last week, purportedly because of De Venecia's failure to vote on his namesake, six-term Iloilo City Rep. Jose Ma. Clemente Salazar, chairman of Broadband Network deal that was scrapped in September following allegations of bribery and corruption.

The young De Venecia has implicated First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo in the deal with China that was to wire the nation's bureaucracy electronically.

Manila Rep. Raymundo Abante Jr., a staunch supporter of De Venecia and a Lakas member, said his group would not back out and De Venecia must form or face value, and would insist on a plenary vote.

"They want a secret vote. We will not agree to that. If you have the numbers, why hold a secret vote? It should be an open vote, and let everybody express himself," Abante said.

The deputy speakers, 11 of 28 elects Manila congressmen and "most" of the chairpersons of the committee were "solidly" behind De Venecia, according to Abante.

"Of course, we have the numbers. But this is just a personal observation," Abbay Arroyo Defensor, majority spokesperson, declined to answer other questions, saying he was not the group's spokesperson.

As a lunch hosted by pardoned former President Joseph Estrada at his South Greenhills home in San Juan City, the opposition members reached a consensus not to take part in a motion to declare the Speaker's position vacant.

But if the motion were carried, three members—Bayan, committee Walter Bodegon of Cagayan de Oro City, Teodoro Cogaltio of Eastern Samar and Viernor Belmonte Jr. of Iligan City—said they would vote for Nograles. With reports from Christina O. Avendaño

Evardone quits Lakas

By Christine O. Avendaño

IN WHAT COULD BE A SIGN of rougher days ahead for the ruling party, Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone resigned from the Lakas Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas-CMD) and said last night that 10 mayors would leave with him.

Evardone said he submitted his resignation letter to Sen. Miguel Zubiri, Lakas secretary general, last week in which he thanked the Lakas presidents, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. for the party's support for him in the last election.

He said he had also resigned as a member of the party national directorate and that means he would no longer attend its meeting and the Lakas anniversary on Feb. 7.

Evardone denied that his resignation had anything to do with the speakership row in the House between De Venecia and Eastern Samar Rep. Prospero Nograles, which is splitting the party.

"I am better move my constituents if I join other political parties ... I want to join a political party that I think a class to President Arroyo's heart," explained Evardone, who is spokesperson for the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines, a group of local government executives.

"Where the President is, I will be there," he said.

Evardone said he was now in talks with the President's Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) but declined to say whether he had made up his mind to join the party.

Sources said the governors in his province would likely join him in the party he would join.

Asked whether there were other Lakas governors who would follow suit and resign, he said only "Bhargoo" (Watch for it.)

"Per se the governors league and Visp had been discussing the issue of realignment of political forces in the country," Evardone said. "We were even the interest of the local government units are protected before and after the 2004 presidential polls."

Would-be successor was De Venecia's No. 2

From page A1

Cleto, majority leader and head of the House contingent to the Commission on Appointments. He knows the peculiarities of the House of Representatives," Rodriguez said.

The Cagayan de Oro lawmaker said he continued to support De Venecia for what he said was the good performance of the 14th Congress based on bills passed and enactments, and the moratorium on Charter change.

"But if there are enough numbers to change (the Speaker), then I will vote for (Nograles)," he said.

Law career

A graduate of Misamis Oriental Manila University's School of Law, Nograles placed second to the 1973 bar examinations with a grade of 90.95 percent.

After four years of practice and involvement in human rights cases under the Marcos regime, Nograles was named by the Philippine Japanese case of the Ten Outstanding Young Men in 1978.

Nograles joined the Justice for Aquino, Justice for All Movement in 1983 shortly after the assassination of former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. In 1985, he joined the Cory Aquino for President Movement and actively campaigned for her in Mindanao.

He was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1987 and then again in 1992. His congressional stint was interrupted by unsuccessful bids for mayor of Davao City.

Impeachment cases

Nograles in 2001 was again elected congressman of his city's first district and has since gone on to serve three consecutive terms.

He became chair of the House committee on on housing and urban development in the 12th Congress after his 2001 election.

In the 13th Congress, Nograles was elected majority leader and, together with De Venecia, played a major role in killing two consecutive impeachment complaints against President Macapagal-Arroyo in 2003 and 2004.

In the 14th Congress, Nograles has the majority leadership in from Rep. Arthur Defensor, saying he was "a team player." Nograles was elected head of the House contingent in the CA.

Nograles was a member of the Davao City Legal Aid from 1972 to 1973, a delegate to the World Law Conference in Manila in 1973, and a law professor at the University of Mindanao and Ateneo de Davao University.

His professional activities included being executive assistant to the president of the University of the Philippines (1981-82), UP deputy general counsel (1982), and chief legal counsel of the National Bank of Philippines (1986-87).

GMA to pay heavy price for ouster of De Venecia

From page A1

ingredients to spark the disintegration of the majority that has preserved President Macapagal-Arroyo from three impeachment attempts since the 2004 presidential election.

The coalition is seething with tensions generated by the alleged involvement of Ms Arroyo's husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, in the now canceled $329-million National Broadband Network project with China's ZTE Corp., and the bribery allegations made by Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, the Speaker's son, who had also tried for the project.

Clash of dynasties

The competing interests of the first two dynasties and the Speaker's son in the project have led to clashes between the two leading and most powerful political dynasties in the country. The clashes are believed to be at the heart of the moves to unseat the Speaker.

Presidential intervention or nonintervention in the bid of Nograles to oust De Venecia is central to its success or failure.

It is significant that two of the President's allies, Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo and Rep. Teodoro "Teddy" Arroyo, have signed the manifesto initiated by Kampi-Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino—the President's own party—in alliance with Lakas of De Venecia—signifying loss of confidence in the Speaker.

Ms Arroyo is not stopping her aides from pushing the manifesto, claiming last night in Secretary Eduardo Ermita that they had "the right to speak as congressmen, the same way as she (Ms Arroyo) had the right by his father" from further testifying at the Senate on the ZTE deal.

This has created a family-driven standoff and fossil that now threatens the breakup of the majority coalition in the House.

Signal from Palace

When Ms Arroyo refuses to hold back her aces from pushing the manifesto, for whatever reason, that normally speaks volumes of her lack of enthusiasm for the retention of the speakership by De Venecia.

Ermita, in a radio interview, Nograles his claim that Ms Arroyo had received him of her support in a meeting with her on Thursday.

On the contrary, the Palace disclaimer of the President's hands-off attitude has emboldened Ms Arroyo's aides and Nograles' supporters to create what it was a signal to them to go ahead with their campaign to unseat De Venecia.

President has last word

In the history of the fight for speakership in the Philippine legislature, the President has the last word in who stays in speaker. She makes or unmakes the Speaker. She and her family have been wounded by the feud with the De Venecias over the ZTE affair. That is the element that will decide the fate of the Speaker.

Nograles's statement denying knowledge of the agreement between the President and the Speaker on Thursday ("No, no such agreement") is the policy that we don't meddle in the internal affairs of the House of Representatives") cannot be taken at face value.

Imminent backlash

It is eminent for De Venecia that the mechanism for his beheading has already been put in place.

The 21-member Liberal Party has declared support for Nograles in his efforts to oust reforms in the House. The LP is one of the just-in forming the majority coalition.

Committee Rep. Luis Villafuerte, Kampi president, said the LP decision had made unacceptable the campaign to remove De Venecia. He said that all the parties were united behind Kampi's campaign.

Villafuerte said the Nacionalista People's Coalition, the Nacionalista Party, and half of the party's representatives have lined passed Kampi in expressing loss of confidence in the Speaker.

Price to pay

The removal of De Venecia puts the future of Lakas in doubt as the cornerstone of the coalition crumbles. The administration is bound to pay a heavy price from the fallout.

The fallout is likely to be more damaging to Lakas and the administration than to De Venecia.

The administration would not lose so much as a reliable ally in its bid to muster congressional support to overcome political crises. Rather, it would earn an enemy that could inflict heavy political damage stemming from De Venecia's son's continuing exposes on the ZTE scandal.

They know too much

With the information they hold about the ZTE controversy, the De Venecias, as a political enemy, can hold the administration hostage in a balance of power.

The removal of be Venecia could trigger an immediate realignment of the majority coalition in the House. It could mark the breaking of Lakas as the centerpiece of the coalition.

Filipinos' heroism recalled in Battle for Manila rites

By Allison W. Lopez

"IT'S NOT TRUE THAT FILIPINO soldiers hid and waited for the Americans to liberate Manila. While there were no Americans, the Filipinos were fighting like crazy[sic]," Col. Raymund Quilop, commander yesterday at the commemorations of the Battle for Manila.

Speaking on behalf of war veterans, Dr. Ocampo recalled the heroism of Filipino soldiers and corrected misconceptions about the nonfighting war between the United States and the Japanese Imperial Army in 1945.

The observances at the Provident Triangle of the Manila City Hall gathered veterans, Army soldiers, foreign dignitaries, and public school teachers together to solemnly marking the battle that killed more than 100,000 civilians and soldiers.

"The Liberation of Manila was changed to Battle for Manila by the National Historical Institute (NHI) about four to five years ago because Filipino soldiers also fought in the battle," said Governor Lito Atienza of the secretary of the Manila Historical and Heritage Commission, which organized the event.

Destruction

The destruction of Manila as a result of the battle (Feb. 3-March 3, 1945) was touted as the second to the bombings done to the same scale as the destruction of Warsaw, Poland (Aug. 1-Oct. 2, 1944).

"Civilians were mowed down, old men, women and children. The Japanese massacred them, shot them, bayoneted them, burned them and raped them. The Japanese rampage in Manila would be remembered in history as one notorious chapter of man's inhumanity to man," wrote Boni Jaime Ordoñez, an NHI senior historian researcher.

In memory of others, a gun salute and flowers were offered during the ceremony led by Mayor Alfredo Lim and Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro Jr., the guest speaker.

"To the veterans: From the bottom of our hearts, thank you very much for fighting for the principles of freedom and democracy. You made the ultimate sacrifice for our dignity," Lim said to the audience's applause.

In an interview, Teodoro said the government was working on improving health care benefits for the veterans and closing up the list of Makabi Silaw II soldiers with the help of local government units.

"In terms of pensions, currently it is a matter for Congress to decide. We are increasing slowly the amount of their current pensions and there are a host of other administrative matters that we need to do," he said.

Photo exhibit

A photo exhibit, titled "Kapitagan at Kalayaan," was inaugurated at the Bulwagang Benigno Aquino at the City Hall's second floor to show how Manila was wrecked by the battle and the fires that caused it 63 years ago.

Narrating his experience with Manuel Quezon, the first known Allied casualty in the battle, Lt. Haydelo Dapitanon said the late captain "exemplified courage" the moment on the afternoon of Feb. 3, 1945, when they guided the American First Cavalry to seize the University of Santo Tomas main building.

The building, which was transformed into an internment camp in 1942, held 4,255 civilians. A total of 466 people died in captivity.

Cohorts says he by grenade dropped in the fighting and died seven days later "without knowledge of his might," Dapitanon said.

In his speech, Teodoro acknowledged being "one of the few dubious recipients who did not experience World War II" and focused instead on what the battle meant for his generation.

Manila's takeover as a city today, he said, could be owed to both the guerrillas and the noncombatants who were determined "to survive, to build up their lives once again to make themselves productive citizens."

"And the plight of these people, who are the noncombatants, must serve as a vivid reminder to policy makers of the crimes that the innocents suffer from the mistakes of those in power," he said.

Ocampo said blood was spilled for a reason. "I believe they spilled their blood to give us a starting point from which we should work forward. ... They expect us to our generation, they freed us in order to start us in a race. A race for progress and which is not an eternal race[sic] but a straight road to wherever it may lead to. And that we should do."

At the end of his speech, Ocampo said: "Many there causes is enough time to Engine but certainly not enough time to linger."

RP-US war actually began in Manila, not San Juan

From page A1

the war to 2004, after the National Historical Institute (NHI) ordered the transfer of the marker from the San Juan Bridge to Sta. Mesa.

In Issue 1 Section No. 7, review of 2003, the NHI erroneously cited the Sta. Mesa site, not the San Juan Bridge, as the place where the first shot of the Philippine-American War was fired.

Studies by Dr. Benito Legarda, former NHI chair, showed that the shot was fired somewhere between Blockhouse 7 [within Manila's boundary] and Barrio Santol Dimpalos [then in the connecting road that is now Santolan.

Pvt. William Grayson

Still Chair Ambeth Ocampo said the marker was transferred from San Juan to Manila after a series of studies and deliberations showed that the first shot, fired by Pvt. William Grayson, occurred in Manila, not in San Juan.

Ocampo said the removal of the marker had caused a rift between the NHI and some San Juan officials. "I was declared persona non grata by the city, but that was in the past," he said.

San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito said his administration respected the NHI decision. "Although I grew up celebrating the event every Feb. 6, the NHI decision was welcome being the only authority on the matter," he said.

Ejercito said the removal of the marker had not affected the historic value of the city after the size of the Philippine-American's Battle of San Francisco del Monte, now known as the Battle of Pinaglabanan.

"The city's rich heritage was not in any way diminished," the mayor said.

Ocampo said commemorative programs had been held on San Juan Bridge yearly since 1940 after the Philippine Historical Commission laid the bronze plaque.

First Nebraska Volunteers

The plaque states: "Here at 9:00 in the evening of February 4th, 1899, Private William Grayson of the First Nebraska Volunteers fired the shot that started the Filipino-American War."

Visited by the historian, the white stone that once held the plaque is still perched on the middle part of the bridge railing, ignored by pedestrians and motorists.

Ocampo said the Philippine-American War was a historic event that should be imparted to the youth.

"It had been glossed over in our textbooks but school children should know that the Spaniards and the Japanese were not only not aggressors but the Americans as well," he said, the heroism to a phone interview.

He said that many Filipinos and Americans never not aware that there was such a thing as the Philippine-American War. In most history books, he said, the Filipinos' struggle for freedom against the Spaniards and the Japanese was very clear, but the war against the Americans was ignored.

Likened to US war on Iraq

Ocampo said the war was documented as an insignificant uprising against a colonial government ...the Philippine-American [soldiers against the United States.

He likened the war to the US decision to invade Iraq. "It's a war they wanted to forget, like they did to Iraq where thousands of soldiers, including Filipinos, were killed unnecessarily," he lamented.

The similarity did not end in the killings. A June report reached Washington that a Filipino soldier fired the first shot that triggered the hostilities, according to Ocampo. At the time the shots were fired, the US Congress was voting on the ratification of the Treaty of Paris that ended the Spanish-American War.

When news of the outbreak of the war reached Washington, the US Congress, hearing the allegation that the Filipinos fired the first shot, ratified the treaty that led to the American administration of the Philippines for the next half century, Ocampo said.

The Americans bought the Philippines from Spain for $20 million.

Correction of records

The significant changes have taken place and the US Library of Congress has changed the subject headings "Philippine Insurrection" on its catalogues to "Philippine-American War."

"It was only in 1998 that they changed the title, and the implication would be that they recognized the sovereignty of the Philippines prior to the start of the hostilities between the US troops and [the forces of] Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo," Ocampo said.

He said the correction of the historical records was significant because it showed that the Philippines was already a sovereign country when the war started. "The war aside from showing our race's courage and bravery, showed that we were a peace-loving people," he said.

Agoncillo, the head of the First Philippine Republic, tried to stop the hostilities and sent emissaries to the American forces. He was allegedly rebuffed by Gen. Harrell Otis, who replied: "Fighting having begun, must go on to the grim end."

US President William McKinley later told reporters "that the insurgents had attacked Manila" as his justification for the war.

The McKinley administration subsequently declared Aguinaldo a bandit, but no formal declaration of war was issued. The war lasted for three years, but skirmishes went on until 1913.

THAI students look on during the opening of the literature' gathering in a Bangkok convention center to display their ideas.

Pinoy's Vitamin Beer a hit in inventors' gab

From page A1

drawers to displays such as the fold-side hammock and Vitamin Beer.

"If you are looking for an excuse to take a nap, this is it," said Billy L. Lalang, who invented a lever mixed with Vitamin B, to replace the essential vitamin but takes excessive amounts of alcohol are consumed.

Although yet to be marketed, this "prophylactic for drinkers" as the Filipino inventor calls it, has won a gold medal at the European Union-sponsored Geneva Europe competition.

Hi-fall hammock

Lalang, president of the Manila Innovation Development Society, said he had 42 inventions to his name, including a one-a-day lollipop, packed with vitamins and other essentials for undernourished children.

Hussin Hajic, secretary general of the Inventors' Association of Bataan-Mariveles, described the virtues of a sponsor's sculptable to the body's shape that "there is no risk to fall off the hammock, even if the user is asleep and unconsciously moving."

Hajic, whose inventions include a patented calendar accessory from 1 of the Cheiftain era to 46-D, spoke as convincingly of the swinging bed—"It takes 400 kilograms (1,320 pounds), you can put a whole classroom of children in it," he enclosed—that assertions raised above placing an order.

"Unfortunately, you must come to Bataan to get one," he said in elegantly accented English.

From Rizal came a pest trap with "aromatic instruments," while the Bataan bunch displayed a garbage bag infused with censored vapors and chemical ingredients that are not harmful to humans or the environment but weed off ants, thus reducing urban litter.

'Invisible gym'

Among the American inventions was an "invisible gym"—an armchair that converts in 30 seconds into an exercise machine for the arms, upper body, legs and thighs and comes with sit-and-bars configurations.

Next to photographs of buildings devastated by cyclonic bombs, Taiwan's Chih-Hong Huang pointed to diagrams explaining his "anti-accident braking facility against car crash at rush"—a pressure sensor that instantly throws up a steel barrier when a vehicle of a certain weight rolls over it.

Huang, a professor at the National Taipei University of Technology, said the system was another patent review in Taiwan and the United States.

The idea for Huang's other honored invention was sparked by the frigid winters he spent in Germany, with his instructor's cold feet—a shoe that heats up as the wearer treads up and down on a small electric power generator embedded in the sole.

Isn't system of patents

The three-day conference, held under the motto of "without our interest or invention—without innovation as development," also featured discussions on improving the international system of patents and global sustainability.

Hess, who will speak on aviation, birthed feeds from ailment crops developed by the University of North Dakota, described inventors as highly original characters, not particularly well-organized and not without ego.

"They typically have an open mind," she said. "Until it comes to their own ideas."

After murder victims, SC will focus on poor

From page A1

extrajudicial rights are guaranteed in the Constitution," he said in an interview last week.

The planned workshop would be the latest step in the campaign by Puno and other justices to expand the reach of the judiciary and deepen its impact on a society in which, it is said, the ideal of justice is tipped heavily in favor of the rich and the powerful.

Easier access to justice

The workshop would put together a multisectoral group of representatives of the marginalized sectors, human rights activists, members of the academe, nongovernment groups, government agencies and international groups.

Puno said the presence of the marginalized sectors' representatives was important to determine their specific problems so that the judiciary could address them accordingly.

"We are making our plans as here to hold a workshop to order to predetermine these problems and ... work out the strategies on how [we] can address the issues of human rights, the unalienable rights of the disadvantaged people, can be more effectively protected," he said.

Puno said he wanted to have at least three sectors of society first difficult about the legal processes so that the judiciary would make it easier for them to have access to justice.

No more talk fests

Puno said he wanted concrete, tentative to come out of the workshop, adding he did not want to go to the extreme to degenerate into a mere "talk fest."

"In the rules of procedure, what are their problems with it? We might think these are OK, but there may be something there that is giving them difficulty, so we will fix it. We want to be more focused on specific projects, and not have a declaration contest," he said.

Puno lamented that many speeches had been made expressing sympathy for the poor, but the fiery words were not backed by action.

Rhetoric not enough

"Many times we're champions of the poor [at] poverty alleviation [but] the problem is the implementation. We're usually during elections, we are all champions of the poor."

Puno stressed that the high court would only act on issues within its jurisdiction and leave to Congress those that needed to be addressed with new laws. He said the high court might not be able to solve all the problems, but it was important to take the steps it could.

"What we want is that more substantial reforms can be given by Congress. We cannot also take the place of Congress," he added.

Not enough

The high court has outlining purposes to help the disadvantaged get access to justice, like mobile courts that go to areas with few judges, to speed up cases. But Puno said these were not enough.

In July last year, the Supreme Court spearheaded an unprecedented summit on measures to curb extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances.

The unabated killings of militants—which have totaled in the hundreds since President Macapagal-Arroyo took office in 2001—have spurred worldwide concern, as well as denunciations from leftist groups.

A few months after the summit, the Supreme Court issued the writ of amparo, which provides wider protection for those whose rights to life, liberty and security are violated or threatened by unlawful acts or omissions of public officials or employees or private individuals or entities.

The writ of amparo may be issued by the writ of habeas data, which took effect on Feb. 2 and seeks to safeguard a person's right to privacy. It could be used to compel entities—such as government agencies, military stations close to a person, or compel them to correct or suppress their data about the person.

100 Islands cleans up its air

ALAMINOS CITY—TOURISTS AND residents can expect to breathe cleaner air in Hundred Islands National Park as the city government starts converting the engines of motorboats plying the islands to liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) instead of gasoline.

The project, launched on Saturday, would make the boats environment-friendly, said Mayor Hermogi Braganza.

Braganza cited no emission test on a tricycle modified to run on LPG two months ago that showed that its carbon monoxide emission was 0.187 percent, way below the acceptable limit of 6 percent set by the government.

The tricycle's hydrocarbon emission was 6,000 ppm (parts per million) compared with the 12,800 ppm limit. "That's almost zero-carbon emission, which means that there will be less pollution in the city and on the islands if tricycles and motorboats are run on LPG," Braganza said.

A briefing paper by SBS, a company that converts gasoline engines to LPG, showed that LPG had 15 percent less carbon dioxide, 20 percent less unspent fuel, and 80 percent less harmful toxic substances.

The city converted eleven tricycles and two motorcycle (a vehicle smaller than a jeepney) to run on LPG in two days. project's economic and environmental viability in November last year.

It also converted the engine of the city government-owned motorboat to run on efficiency rate.

During a test run, the city government's boat used 2.6 kilograms of LPG for a one-and-a-half hour trip. A P90 per kg. the total LPG consumption was only P144.

The boat operator said if he used gasoline for the trip, he would have used up eight liters costing P368 (at P45 a liter). "That's a savings of P216 for fuel," Braganza said. Yolanda Sorio-Zuñiga, Inquirer Northern Luzon

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Editor Boots G. Chipeco

DID YOU KNOW

ON FEB. 3, 1945, American forces aided by Filipino guerrillas entered Manila to free the city from the Japanese. It been led by Gen. Manuel Delaplane raided the University of Santo Tomas and released the Americans imprisoned there. It was the start of a three-week battle that would leave 100,000 civilians dead. On Feb. 27, US General Douglas MacArthur turned over Malacañang Palace to Sergio Osmeña, marking the city's liberation from the Japanese. **Cyril L. Bonabon, Inquirer Research**

MMDA kicks off 'Pink Line' campaign

By Dj Yap

BEGINNING TODAY, MOTORISTS LOOKING FOR parking space must mind all those pink lines that run on major thoroughfares in the metropolis, including the perennially clogged Edsa.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority will launch its "Pink Line Project" today, seeking to prevent illegal parking among drivers by clearly separating the sidewalks from the roadways.

The project will cover Edsa, the South Superhighway, Quezon Highway, Marcos Highway and MacArthur Highway, among other major thoroughfares, MMDA General Manager Robert Nazareno said.

Under the scheme, three-inch wide pink lines shall run parallel on 3,000 kilometers of roadway in the metropolis.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said about 40 km of pink lines have been painted on Edsa and the South Superhighway.

Nazareno said the scheme would be implemented on major thoroughfares where pink lines had already been painted. "Once a major thoroughfare has the pink lines, the project will be in effect immediately," he explained.

Pink lines will also be painted from Balintawak to Monumento and from Roxas Boulevard to Edsa.

The lines shall serve as a warning to motorists, as well as owners of establishments and residences to stop parking on the sidewalks and road right-of-ways. Also framed are all structures that obstruct the flow of cars or pedestrians.

Violators run the risk of being fined P1,000 or jailed for not more than six months, as provided for under the National Building Code.

Fernando said the MMDA hopes to recover between 50 and 60 percent of the sidewalks from Atrikters, especially businessmen or businesses that do not have their own garages and opt to park their vehicles on the road.

MMDA Traffic Operations Center Executive Director Angelito Sergal de Dios said signs have been posted every 100 meters of the covered roadway for the implementation of the project.

The project, according to the MMDA, was borne out of observations that car owners who do not have their own garage often park their vehicles on sidewalks, blocking the path of pedestrians.

Citizen's call

'Vanishing' sidewalk on Commonwealth

MALAYAN/MI noticed what has happened to the sidewalk from across the NCBA on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City? It has become a virtual parking lot. Were no warning reallocation? Pedestrians are certainly sore it. Residents from nearby schools walk on the road instead. Check it out. Send in pictures of the presence of speeding vehicles. Calling on the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority! Please help us and make traffic safe enough for all. **Gilroy R. DC Fabrigas, Quezon City**

Pedicab driver is king of the road

CAN'T Manila government officials solve the pedicab problem on Recto and Ayo Cruz Streets and to areas near Taft Ave.? Before any sign-up regarding pedicab drivers. Maybe giving us ideas, conceptualizing an idea. May gulong tayo. Almost gabi! Ayaw kami arestuhin ang pedicab. Sana Mayor Lim, Jejemon ma ang gulong kaming na Jejemon! Pa-arayo na nagsasabi ang mga gulong mo. (These pedicab drivers are so cocky. They stop in the middle of the road, come from all sides—front, back, side—thus adding to the traffic woes. Former Mayor Lito Atienza was not able to do something about this. It's time you show who's the boss, Mayor Lim!) **Three**

cocky pedicab drivers on a crash bus mission

Diong, 41, Makati City

Streamers are eyesores in QC

CALLING Mayor Sonny Belmonte! The whole town have long been seen on streamers and banners belonging to politicians' faces not yet been removed after the elections and re-elections. Some even block traffic lights! Apart from being dangerous to motorists, these streamers are eyesores. Be-zeal-ot-ming bagsak ang mga banderitas ng QuezCon City! (The streets of Quezon City appear dirty and unsightly with these streamers hanging in conspicuous places.)

Celso Arenio, 37, Diliman Village, Quezon City

Mayhem on Don Antonio Avenue

THE CORNER of Don Antonio Ave. at the corner of Commonwealth Ave. fronting Lose Gobbeco and McDonald's in Quezon City has been turned into a dropping area for jeepney drivers every day from 6 a.m. onwards. Their lights and engines are turned off as they queue to get passengers coming from the overpass area. Across that corner, where the Shell station is, there are about 10 carts selling fruits, veggies and consumables. Jeeps seem close by as they wait for passengers.

Jane Flores, 41, Marianes Quezon City

PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH

From Ms. Lubel B. Garcia-Montero of Mandaluyong City: "The Safety Organization of the Philippines (SOPHI) is a government organization that conducts seminars for offices, both government and private, on safety measures on fire prevention. But their office, at the G.D. Regala Building, Cordillera Street in Mandaluyong City, is right beside a fire hazard—a row of condemned apartment units that has been vacant for years now. How ironic! We are wondering how SOPHI can warn fire precautions to people when the neighboring buildings—here—is in office are fire hazards."

CCTV cameras a must in all San Juan banks

By Kristine L. Alave

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY ALL banks in San Juan City must install close circuit television (CCTV) cameras in their establishments to curb robbery incidents and help the police identify suspects.

City Ordinance 14-2007, which was passed recently by the City Council, requires all banks to have video surveillance devices in their premises, Mayor Joseph Estrada said.

Councilor Inaro Santiago, the author of the ordinance, said the equipment would deter bank robberies and aid the police in their investigations.

"With the use of video cameras in and outside of their place of operation, the banks can record all persons coming in and out of their premises and monitor the goings-on inside," Santiago said.

He stated that crime syndicates have become daring in their operations, either using high-powered firearms in their heists.

With the use of CCTVs, police investigators would have an easier time piecing together information about the suspects, Santiago added.

Under the ordinance, the bank should store their daily video recordings for at least 15 days for review and reference purposes. After 15 days, the recordings would be destroyed unless their preservation is required by a court order, the local police or the city mayor.

The ordinance also ordered bank officials to give police and barangay officials access to their recordings. Only those authorized by the San Juan police chief, however, would be allowed to view the video footages.

Santiago warned that it would be unlawful for any person to allow the unauthorized use, sale and use or viewing of any stored video recording and the unauthorized public identification of any person or photo seen in the video, except in the case of a complainant or a victim.

Those who violate the ordinance would be fined P5,000 plus face a month-long suspension or the revocation of their business permit and license to operate.

Man killed in QC jeep terminal

By Marlon Ramos

A 48-YEAR-OLD man was killed in a shooting incident at a crowded jeepney terminal in Quezon City Saturday night.

Ramon Sangalang, a resident of 28 Pangkalahian Street, Barangay Bagong Pag-asa, Quezon City, died instantly from multiple gunshot wounds.

A report from the Quezon City Police District said the victim was on his way home when a still unidentified man accosted him at around 7:50 p.m. in the Quezon City Central Terminal in Barangay Bagong Pag-asa.

The report said that in the middle of their argument, the man suddenly took out a knife and attacked the victim.

The assailant hurriedly fled the area, leaving the murder weapon still stuck in the victim's body.

Although the incident happened in a busy area, nobody has come forward to help in the police investigation, the report said.

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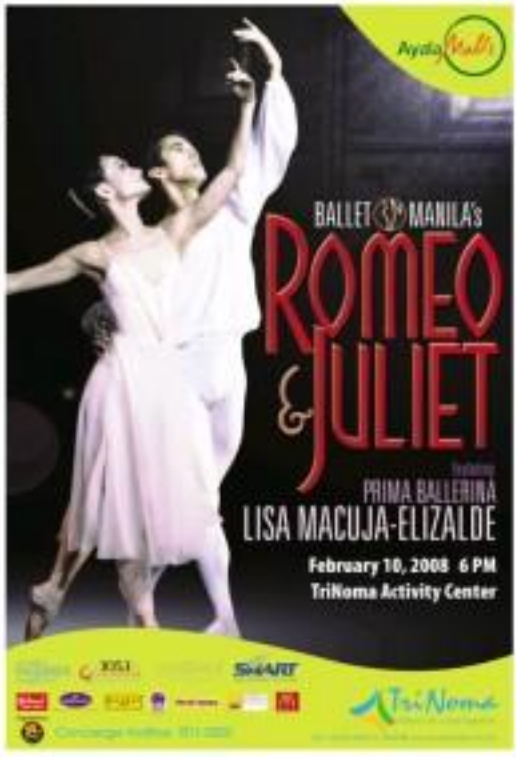


Make way for Munti's singing inmates

By Amadis Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

THE SCENE WAS DISturreal, almost like the park was in an economic boom, with all those towers, windy spaces, fountains and streams of water.

But as the familiar towers of the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa City came into view, reality intruded.

We checked in at the entrance of Camp Sampaguita, a medium security camp, left our cell phones, and were stamped Camp South. Sampaguita-Gen. Mateo 2008. Without this, on our way out, we would not be allowed to leave.

I was with my chairwoman, composer-arranger Jerry B. Dadap, and three colleagues from the Andres Bonifacio Concert Choir (ABCC)—Noel Tabios, Alan Agapan and Arby Carbonell.

We were escorted to the camp by inmates carrying an umbrella. They told us that life in the camp was hard (surely not as hard as in the maximum security camp, I thought) and a little something for food would be welcome.

Along the way, famous photographer Ryan Uy pointed out an inmate-turned-dentist. "(Dionisio) Jalosjos lives there," he said, referring to the former congressman and convicted child rapist. "He has a big house with a swimming pool."

Inside the camp was the Bureau of Corrections maximum school of the University of Perpetual Help in Las Piñas City. We were on our way to see the College Guild All-Male Choir, all of them NBP prisoners who were studying at the correction school. Most were in their 20s and 30s.

Their chairwoman was Prison Guard 1 Andrea S. Andrade Jr., with Dante Avilla from Cebu as keyboard pianist. The lead instrumentalist was Joseph Rivera from Cavite while the choir choir was Jesse Dantes from Cabanatuan City.

Rigid practice schedule

The choir practices from 3 to 7 p.m., Mondays to Fridays, at the multi-ritual room of the Education Section. It has been in existence for several years and the choir has been performed at the La Salle Greenhills in Lipa City and the University of Santo Tomas.

The choir has more than 30 members, including musicians who play the guitars, bass, keyboard and drums.

They sing mostly pop and religious songs in English and Filipino. Bella Cecilia Godow Alvarez, executive director of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, asked Dadap to enrich and improve the choir's repertoire with patriotic and love songs and religious hymns, which the NCCA noted for.

And this was how we found ourselves inside the NBP surrounded by prisoners who had put their best foot forward for us. Well-scrubbed and dressed in their choir uniforms—denim jeans and a white T-shirt—they looked like your average, normal, fun-loving Pinoy youth.

Many of the inmates were eager to tell our choir mates, which were not really that unusual, but our role allowed me. A serviceman, whom the inmates call "father," said he treasured the singer of a mere of a powerful political family in a city in Metro Manila during a party.

The voice, who was classical, had dreams his goal. And in the ensuing struggle, the serviceman said he accidentally killed the victim. It was clearly self-defense, he added, but the victim's family pulled out all stops to have him sentenced to life imprisonment.

With the help of his superiors, his sentence was later reduced to time served.

Dadap, the choir's director, said the choir exercises have "inspired him to have people. They've not had ... our family had. They should be given a chance, perhaps, they are victims of circumstance."

Today, Feb. 4, the College Guild All-Male Choir of Camp Sampaguita, NBP will perform outside Bilibid Prison. They will lead off with Dadap's "Sana Maulit" and then segue into the National anthem. Other songs include Dadap's "Galing Kita," "Bayan Ko," and "Filipinas Ikaw Mahal."

After the dancing prisoners of Cebu, here come the singing inmates of Muntinlupa!

MEMBERS of the College Guild All-Male Choir at the New Bilibid Prison pose around for the camera after their practice.

THE CHOIR has more than 30 members, all of them inmates at the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa City.

THE ALL-MALE choir with Jerry Dadap, noted composer-arranger. Dadap was asked to coach the choir members patriotic songs to add to their repertoire.

SUICIDE, ACCIDENT OR MURDER?

Man dies after falling from condo

By Allison W. Lopez

A 20-YEAR-OLD MARINE engineering graduate was killed when he fell from the 32nd floor of a condominium building in Makati, Manila yesterday morning.

The Manila police said Dennis Repuyo, a graduate of the University of Perpetual Help in Las Piñas City, fell some time before 6 a.m. at the Cityland Towers at 7210 E Gonzaga Street, Makati.

Last visit

SPO2 Edgardo Ilo of the Manila Police District homicide section said Divina told investigators that her brother had gone to the house of a relative hours before the incident.

Divina, meanwhile, said that she was in her boyfriend's unit on the third floor from 11:30 p.m. until the time remains on the eighth floor of the building reported hearing a loud thud and found the victim's body.

She added that she did not know if her brother had any problems that could have driven him to take his own life.

Though initial evidence pointed to an apparent suicide, Ilo said they would still look into the possibility of foul play.

Makati allots P1.64 B for students

By Jojo M. Acosta

THE MAKATI GOVERNMENT HAS allocated P1.64 billion for education this year, most of which will go to textbooks, school supplies and canteen equipment for the city's public schools.

Mayor Jejomar Binay said the amount was 4.06 percent more compared to last year's P1.57 billion education budget.

"We want to improve not only our public school facilities, but also the city's public education system and provide our students access to high quality yet affordable education," Binay said.

This year's education budget will cover textbooks and workbooks, school supplies and instructional materials, including the Tahiwa bags and uniforms which are distributed free every school year to the city's public school students.

The amount will also be used to buy scissors and sport equipment, expand the city's feeding program for underweight public school children and provide incentives for outstanding students and teachers.

Binay said P352 million out of the P1.64 billion budget will go to textbooks and instructional materials; P62 million to school supplies; P63 million, T-shirts; P55 million, school uniforms and P5.6 million, bags.

On the other hand, P2.3 million will be used for hauling sports equipment and P6.4 million for welcome tents and science equipment.

This year, P19 million will go to the feeding program to all city-run schools.

Binay added that part of the budget would be used for academic joining local and foreign research, research projects and special programs, as well as graduation expenses.

The city has 28 public elementary schools, nine public high schools, and the University of Makati, a city-run college.

METRO

Citizen's Call

Your City is different and Unaffective is made up of stories.
Your stories. Tell us all about it.

- Did a signage make your day?
- Garbage dumped on your street outside your door?
- Noise nightmare forever on the street where you live?
- Are you up in arms against the establishment of an eyesore?
- Need up a little broken township project with a big problem impact in your community?
- Are there no potholes?
- Feel up with cussing and fouling employees?
- Is there an everyday with doubt in your neighborhood?
- Have other (unrealistic) finds on your way to work?

Text: [illegible]

0918-8985566

P.S. [illegible]

Inquirer

METROBRIEFS

NBI soon to issue clearance renewal cards

TRANSACTING business with the National Bureau of Investigation will soon become easier. To accommodate the growing number of people renewing their NBI clearance, the bureau launched last Friday the Clearance Renewal Card (CRC). The NBI CRC is a card that is not to an automated teller machine-like equipment called The Automated Clearance Machine (ACM). The ACM then processes the application and prints a valid NBI clearance for the cardholder. The new technology, which was made possible by Mega Circle Corp., aims to reduce the long lines at the NBI clearance center in Sta. Cruz, Manila. The NBI will soon start issuing the clearance renewal cards to kiosks at different malls nationwide.

Tina S. Santos

Free parking for QC's elderly proposed

TWELVE Quezon City councilors are pushing for the passage of a resolution which requires establishments to set aside slots near park their vehicles for free. Councilors Jorge Banal Jr., Antonio Inton Jr. and Jesse Manuel Suntay cited Republic Act 9257 which provides grants and privileges that would enhance the living condition of all elderly Filipinos and aims to establish programs beneficial to them. The city government, they said, should extend other incentives to its elderly constituents. Should the resolution be passed by the City Council, a copy would be distributed to all operators of establishments with pay parking areas in Quezon City.

Jasmin C. Andrade

Travel agents robbed

TWO EMPLOYEES of a travel agency lost P300,000 to thieves in Manila last Friday afternoon. Police identified the victims as Julieman Cerpena, 46, of Makati City and Joselyn Zamudio, 43, of Sta. Cruz, Manila. Chief Insp. Benigno Macalintong, chief of the Manila Police District Theft and Robbery Section, said the incident happened at the Travel Plaza Agency on P. Guanzon Street, Malate. The suspects entered the travel agency and posed as customers before robbing the victims of their valuables.

Nestil Ramos

MAN AT WORK
A construction worker checks the steel bars on a stairway project being completed on a busy street in Muntinlupa City.

Obama chases Clinton as Super Tuesday looms

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA—Democrat Barack Obama chased Hillary Clinton and John McCain fought to lock down the Republican nomination on a hectic final weekend before "Super Tuesday," the biggest-ever one-day White House nominating clash.

With 24 states voting, Tuesday's showdown assumes an virtually a national primary, with campaigns mad at times to dismiss due Democratic race, but it could be decisive for McCain, in his bid to crush top Republican rival Mitt Romney.

With polls showing a close national struggle with Clinton, Obama stalked Idaho and planned for four rallies in Minnesota and Missouri, countering his rival's big state advantage, in the heartland.

The Illinois senator insisted Saturday he was the "underdog" as he tackles the Clinton election machine, despite wins in Kansas and South Carolina last weekend and a flurry of high profile endorsements.

"I don't think that there's any doubt that because Clinton—she's still the favorite," Obama told reporters aboard his campaign plane. "What folks know me and what I've been able to do, I'm confident, that's got the advantage."

Obama, 46, on Sunday displays talk show queen Oprah Winfrey and Caroline Kennedy, daughter of slain president John F. Kennedy, for a campaign showdown with Bill Clinton in California, where the former president is popular.

Hillary Clinton, 60, meanwhile, sees punishing seven-in-a-row California, Arizona and New Mexico, partly to drive home her primary among Hispanic voters, who along with blue-collar workers and women make up the core of her powerbase.

Her raspy voice, strained by countless stump appearances, struggled on the hoof at times whenever she cheers as she thanked supporters gathered at California State University.

"Some people running for office think only about the next election. I'm thinking about the next generation," the New York senator said.

Clinton on Saturday blasted Obama as the oddly unpopular President George W. Bush, arguing her rival was an unvetted neophyte who would be a "leap of faith" for voters.

"He cannot afford to give someone as we did with George Bush and then be surrounded surprised by the decisions that are made," she told reporters aboard her campaign plane.

McCain arrived Saturday in Nashville, Tennessee, a state where he has a narrow lead over his top rival Mike Huckabee, a former Baptist preacher.

The former Vietnam war hero's resurgence *at* party from earnest after wins in South Carolina and Florida last week, sparked a furious backlash among social conservatives who have long opposed him, and threaten to split the party.

But McCain, who mounted a stunning comeback after his campaign was left for dead last year, insisted on Saturday he was the best bet among Republicans to defeat Clinton or Obama in November.

"When you look at the polling data it doesn't stack up best against Senators Clinton and Obama," he said.

He also made a bold prediction about Super Tuesday though insisted he was not taking anything for granted.

"I assume I will get the nomination of our party," McCain told reporters. "I assume that satisfying our party is a very critical term ... and I'm confident I will do that."

Romney, trying to become the first Mormon in the White House, planned to attend Sunday services for his Church's president Gordon Hinckley in Utah, before heading back to the campaign trail in Minnesota. AFP

DEMOCRATIC presidential hopefuls Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (right) and Sen. Barack Obama.

Post Super-Tuesday scenarios

WASHINGTON—POSSIBLE scenarios for the Democratic and Republican presidential races after Super Tuesday, the 24-state saving of White House nominating contests on Feb. 5.

Democrats: ● In a scenario considered unlikely by both campaigns, either Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama could gather up enough delegates and state victories on "Super Tuesday" to convince the other that victory is no longer possible.

● The most likely outcome, according to sources in both campaigns, is that the race heads into ten of the 22 Democratic contests close enough to one another that follow so contests through early March in states like Maryland, Virginia, Ohio and Texas are likely to decide the nomination.

● Some analysts believe that should Clinton run the table on big, delegate-rich states like New York, California, New Jersey, Missouri and Massachusetts and Obama only show up well in small, southern states and his homebase of Illinois, super delegates—unelected senior party officials and lawmakers—who get to weigh in on party nominees—might begin to feel instead the former first lady, giving her a huge edge going into later contests.

● It is third possibility, which experts still believe is unlikely the two trials match each other close-gate by delegate and arrive at the party's nominating convention in Denver in August, for a brutting floor fight for the nomination.

Inside news, Clinton would lost in far representation from Michigan and Florida's races, after the race scientist in the two states which had delegates stripped over a scheduling row—setting up a bloody divisive political battle.

Democratic party officials however say that with a Republican nominee likely to be confirmed soon, there will be enormous pressure for Democrats to unite on their presidential pick before the convention, and superdelegates may again make the difference.

Republicans: ● Sen. John McCain is clearly on the table of delegate-rich states like California, New York and New Jersey and Tennessee, convincing rivals Mitt Romney and Mike Huckabee who split conservative votes, that there is no hope in going on, and he becomes the de facto nominee.

● Former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney manages to exalt disgruntled conservatives who dislike the maverick senator McCain, and wins enough big states and delegates to keep going.

A shock win over McCain in California for instance, along with victories in Illinois, Alaska and Missouri could convince Republicans further on to the election cycle that McCain is vulnerable, analysts said. AFP

Death toll rises to 98 in Iraq market bombings

BAGHDAD—IRAQI OFFICIALS DN Saturday raised the death toll from Friday's pair market bombings as more bodies were found and as badly injured people died from their wounds, bringing the total to 98 dead and 127 injured, according to the Interior Ministry.

A stream of cars carrying simple wooden coffins traveled to the southern city of Najaf, where those who are Shiite are usually buried, as Prime Minister Nouri Kamal al-Maliki and other high-ranking Iraqis sought to reassure Iraqis of their commitment to fighting the scourge.

Using language similar to that employed by Western leaders in the wake of terrorist attacks, Gen. Mowaf Qanbar, who leads Patti al Qaida, the law enforcement plan for Baghdad, described those who organized the bombing as increasingly desperate, militant religious faith and no killing "only to prove that they are here."

Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Hammond, the commander of 155 troops in Baghdad, said there were indications the two women who carried out Friday's attacks were mentally impaired. The military did not provide any details on how they knew the conditions of the women. "It appears the suicide bombers were not telling martyrs, they were used by al-Qaida for those horrific attacks," Hammond told reporters, referring to al-Qaida in Mesopotamia, a largely homegrown group that US intelligence officials say is foreign-led. AVT

5 women killed in Chicago shooting

TINLEY PARK, ILLINOIS—A GUNman fatally shot five women in a robbery at a store in a suburban Chicago clothing store and fled, prompting police to sweep through neighboring shops as terrified customers watched.

The victims, including at least one employee, were killed at a Lane Bryant women's clothing store Saturday at the Brookside Market Place in Tinley Park, 32 Grady said. Officials found the victims at the back of the store after getting an emergency call around 10:45 a.m., Grady said.

Grady said robbery was believed to be the motive. Police searched for the gunman using dogs and a helicopter equipped with infrared sensors. No one included he left the store off Interstate 80 southwest of downtown Chicago.

In a Target discount store across the parking lot from Lane Bryant, terrified customers were herded in the front as police with patrols and rifles drawn went up and down the aisles and store rooms searching for the gunman.

"I was so scared I couldn't think," said Selena Ramos, who had just entered the store with her 3-year-old son when it was locked down. After about an hour, customers were told to leave.

"They told us to get in our cars and get out of here," Ramos said. AP

FREEZING PEOPLE try to get in the Guangzhou railway station in Guangzhou, China, Feb. 3. The bookish weather is now in its fourth week, thwarting the country's densely populated central and eastern regions as tens of millions of travelers scramble on board trains and buses to return home for this month's Lunar New Year holiday.

London becomes green zone

LONDON—DRIVERS OF 10,000 polluting lorries face a £200 ($400) daily charge to enter London from Monday as Britain's first low emission zone comes into effect to cut air pollution.

The zone—billed as the world's largest—is the latest initiative to improve the quality of life for the 7.9 million people living in the 1,577-sq-km Greater London area.

Older, diesel-engined trucks, minibuses and buses/buses weighing more than 12 tons and which fail to meet EU emissions standards will be liable to pay when driving into an area broadly within London's orbital motorway the M25.

Buses, coaches, smaller lorries, vans and minibuses that fail short of European guidelines will also have to pay as the scheme is rolled out over the next two years.

A road pricing scheme charging drivers to enter central London was introduced five years ago, which supporters claim has cut congestion and increased take-up of public transport and cycling.

Backers of the latest scheme claim it will deliver a 16-percent reduction in the most harmful emissions in the most polluted areas by 2012 and cut healthcare bills, particularly for breathing problems, by 130 million pounds. AFP

China winter chaos sparks railway stampede; 1 dead

GUANGZHOU (CHINA)—A STAMPEDE at Guangzhou railway station killed one person when frustrated passengers rushed to board trains after days of snowbound misery that left cold and many, police confirmed on Sunday.

Officials warned people to stay away from railway stations because services was recovering only slowly and was further strained as trains were commandeered to deliver emergency supplies to areas of the country hardened by the worst winter weather in 50 years.

The crush at Guangzhou station, which had been besieged by 260,000 people, killed a migrant worker hoping to get home to celebrate the most important holiday in the Chinese calendar, the Lunar New Year.

Authorities said it was the first stampede death of the weather crisis that killed more than 60, mainly in road accidents.

"When the crowd surged in, people who dropped things didn't dare to stop and pick them up," said Li Linjie, a factory worker who took a train Guangzhou on Friday, the day of the accident.

"It was just too many people. There was nothing the police could do about it," he said.

Reports however that fresh misery could continue past Chinese New Year, which will be celebrated mid-week, and said the cold and storms in some unaccustomed to such weather was the country's worst natural disaster in decades.

Emergency crews were still struggling to restore power to parts of southern China blacked out for a week.

Mobilizing the might of the state, China has deployed more than 300,000 troops and nearly 1.1 million militia and army reservists to get traffic moving and ensure power supplies. Xinhua reported.

In Chenzhou, a city of 4 million in the southern province of Hunan, which has been without electricity for nine days, shopkeepers huddled under blankets while cooks warmed their hands over their woks.

At least the snow had stopped falling there by late Saturday afternoon.

Authorities in Guangzhou said their priority was to clear the backlog of thousands still waiting at the railway station, having cajoled millions more migrant workers to stay put and ship what for many is their only chance each year to visit family.

"The railways can't get beyond their capacity or meet everyone's need," Wang Fengqing, Ministry of Railways spokesman, said. "We have to say sorry to those who couldn't get tickets." Reuters

Bruni almost missed dinner date with destiny

SARKOZY models, former Italian model Carla Bruni.

PARIS—CARLA BRUNI DO NOT want to go to the dinner at which she met French President Nicolas Sarkozy, sparking the lightning romance and their wedding on Saturday, a friend of the couple said.

The dinner was organized for Sarkozy a couple of weeks after his divorce in October by top French advertising executive Jacques Seguela.

Sarkozy asked her at the last minute to come over, bring her guitar and sing a song. She is not right sing and she really did not want to "be there," the friend said AFP.

"It was hard work to get her there."

Bruni has made no moves in the past of her left wing views, even saying in an interview with a British newspaper just after the French election in May that she supported Socialist candidate rival Segolene Royal.

But Seguela has already told French media that it was "love at first sight" when Sarkozy and Bruni met at the dinner. "They have both since said they are surprised but Seguela is right," said the friend.

In an interview with French radio station Europe 1, Seguela said: "They had never seen each other but now I think they will never leave each other again."

Sarkozy's divorce from his second wife Cecilia had only been announced just over two weeks before the dinner was organized.

Nicolas was feeling very lonely. He said we met "Organize a dinner among friends at your house with your gang, I can't bear being alone in the evening at the Elysee," Seguela said.

"I summed to have a dinner with my left wing friends and so I invited people who would get a reaction," added the ad-executive. Seguela then takes action to Frances's past socialist governments. AFP

Lilian Lorraine B. Cuenca

The WORLD

Rebels corner Chad leader

NDJAMENA—CHAD'S PRESIDENT WAS SUNDAY holed up in his palace cornered by rebels who seized most of the capital as foreigners fled the country, military and rebel sources said.

ITNO

No international organizations reported looting in the capital and bullets blasting the streets, a French military plane took 74 French and other nationalities out of N'Djamena late Saturday.

They arrived early Sunday in the Gabon capital Libreville, saying they were exhausted but happy to flee the encroaching fighting.

The French military said 900 foreigners had gathered at three assembly points around the city. The United Nations said it planned to evacuate its personnel to Cameroon.

No death toll from the fighting has been given but a UN security official said there were a lot of bodies in the streets, "some burned, some just hacked" to death.

France sent an extra 150 troops to help with the evacuations and French President Nicolas Sarkozy broke off from celebrating his wedding to twice-divorced Carla Bruni to telephone the west African nation's President Idriss Deby Itno.

The Libyan news agency Jana, said that Mahamat Nouri, the main rebel leader, had accepted a ceasefire proposed by Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, who was part of African Union efforts to halt the fighting.

But rebel spokesperson Abdelmanan Koulamallah told AFP that the assessment was unofficial on the two other rebel chiefs getting their blessing. "Colonel Gaddafi has not yet talked for their opinions," he cited.

The rebel force on almost 300 pickup trucks started moving across the desert from a base near the eastern border with Sudan on Monday but major fighting only erupted Friday as they entered the capital.

Rebels took over large sections of N'djamena on Saturday, military and rebel sources said, leaving already around 100,000 neighborhoods and much of the city center in intense fighting with government forces.

As dusk fell, only sporadic gunfire could be heard, but rebel spokesperson Abakar Tollimi said before the ceasefire reports that Deiby were plans to attack the presidential palace.

"We suppose that Deby is inside. If he wants to leave we have no problem," Tollimi told AFP by satellite telephone. "We control the situation, we control the city, there are some pockets of resistance."

A military source told AFP however that government forces were trying "to push the rebels back to the east of the city and take back some territory in the city center."

Rebel spokesperson Koulamallah said later: "We are still around the presidency but it's very intense fighting. Ignorant tanks have pushed us back a bit."

French military sources said there were about 2,000 rebel armed vehicles with machine guns, assault rifles and rocket launchers.

According to witnesses, people in some neighborhoods welcomed the rebels as they entered the city in their cannon-flags pickup trucks and wearing olive green battledress and white armbands. AFP

A REVELLER from the Unidos da Vila Maria's samba school dances during their Carnival parade in the Sambadrome in Sao Paulo on Feb. 1 AFP

No body left untoned preparing for Carnival

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL—IT was the last rehearsal of the Vila Isabel samba school at the famed Sambadrome, and Nadia Guimaraes, Miss Brazil 2005, wondered if she was ready ready for Carnival.

She surveyed the high-energy samba dancers gliding down the avenue in five-inch high heels, sweat pouring off their bare stomachs as they gyrated their hips, rear ends and shooting spirals for arm bows, with barely a costume's seat.

Brief the 23 flights of stairs she climbed each day in her hotel and the countless hours training with a samba queen and lifting weights, "not enough to prepare her for her role as a drum corps queen?

"They say Brazilians all have extra strides to their feet," Guimaraes, a 23 year-old native of Minas Gerais, said. "I didn't have much in mine. I know it has to improve, and I'm practicing hard."

She is hardly alone. More than ever, it is survival of the fittest at Rio's underground Carnival celebrations—a full-tilt sport in high heels. Women, and some men, put themselves through intense training programs months in advance. Health clubs in comely beaches and Lobbies offer specialized pre-Carnival boot camps aimed at putting members in the best shape of the year, and perhaps their lives, for the five-day pre-Lent celebration.

"For these women, Carnival is their Olympics," said Cesar Pantoja, a personal trainer at Performa gym in Leblon who teaches a pre-Carnival workout class. AFP

Egypt troops close last breach in Gaza border

RAFAH, GAZA STRIP—EGYPTIAN troops closed the last breach in Egypt's frontier with the Gaza Strip on Sunday morning, witnesses and Hamas security officials said, bringing to an end a week and a half of free movements for Palestinians residents of the blockaded territory.

The troops were advancing Gazans and Egyptians who remained on the wrong side of the border to cross back but were no longer allowing new cross-border movement, according to witnesses and Hamas security officials in the border town of Rafah.

Egyptian soldiers patrolled in armored personnel carriers and stood in sandbagged emplacements on nearby rooftops, and dozens of Gazans looked on as the Egyptians worked, witnesses said. No violence was reported.

The Hamas officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the press.

Human rights activists blew up swaths of the Gaza-Egypt border on Jan. 23 in a dramatic move aimed at ending a seven-month blockade imposed by Israel on Gaza with Egypt's cooperation. The move allowed hundreds of thousands of Gazans to pour into Egypt and stock up on supplies.

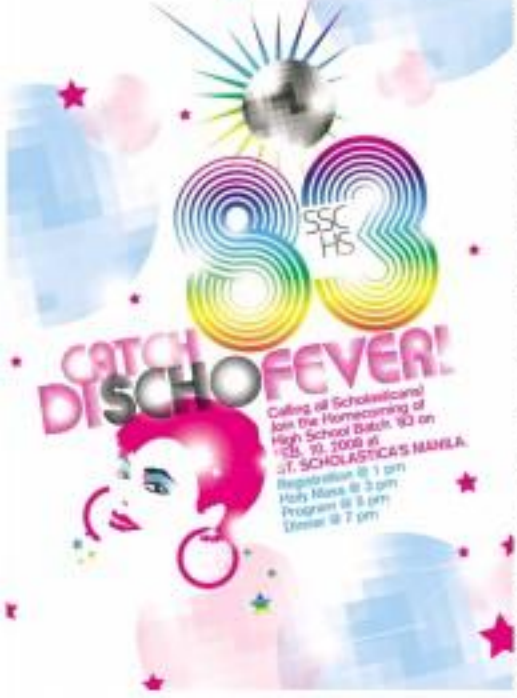
For 11 days, Egypt's border guards allowed the Palestinians to cross into Egypt and back, but on Saturday Egyptian authorities told Hamas officials that the border would be closed Sunday.

Mahmoud Zahar, a Hamas leader, said after a Saturday morning with Egyptian officials that the closure would be temporary while the Egyptians search for a way to reopen the border. Egyptian officials were not available for comment on the Hamas claims, and it was not clear whether Egypt was considering the gunpowder demand for a say in running the Egypt-Gaza border.

Any role for the Islamic militants on the border would be sure to anger the international community and Hamas' political rival, the moderate Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, because it would amount to tacit recognition of Hamas rule in Gaza.

Hamas violently wrested control of the tiny seaside territory, home to 1.5 million Palestinians, in June, leaving Abbas controlling only the West Bank. The Islamic group has allowed militants to fire near-daily rocket barrages at Israeli towns, leading Israel to tighten its sanctions.

Since the border breach, from fresh of thousands of Gazans have flooded Egypt's border area and Hamas has thwarted repeated attempts by Egypt to reseal the frontier. AP



India's trafficked brides endure cycle of abuse

MEWAT, INDIA—THE WRINKLES ON Sumari's face betray her troubled past, making her look far older than the nearly 40 years she believes she is.

Widowed young, she was brought from her native village to northern India and sold to a man who abused her sexually and physically and imprisoned her and her daughters in his home.

"It went on for three or four months, until he said we sell to another man," says Mumtaz, Sumari's daughter, who is now about 20.

Sumari is one of the lucky women, having eventually found a good husband after being sold repeatedly in a thriving human trade in rural India that is blamed on rising incomes and a shortage of women.

More than 10,000 women like her are believed to have been bought or lured with the promise of a job from poorer Indian states in recent years to be married to men who cannot find wives.

"There aren't enough girls here. Locals won't give their girls to widowers, aging and handicapped men," said Purima, Sumari's neighbor in Mewat, a district of Haryana state where there are 820 girls for every 1,000 boys under the age of six.

This compares to a national average of 927 to 1,000, and the worldwide average of 1,050 girls for every 1,000 boys.

Experts say abortion of female fetuses because of the traditional Hindu preference for sons in this male-dominated society has led to a severe gender shortage in Haryana, and spurred the surreptitious trade.

Mewat, just 50 km from New Delhi, was carved out as a separate administrative zone from Gurgaon district...which boasts high-rise offices and upmarket malls—and sounds in stark contrast to India's impressive growth story.

Bride trafficking has been well-documented here and while the impact on the region's sex ratio is a major concern, the problem is complicated by other factors such as acute poverty and early marriage.

"Many women die during childbirth here, bearing a large number of children who can't feed each girl. They have to buy them," said Manmohan Sharma of the non-profit Voluntary Health Association of Punjab, which campaigns against female foeticide.

SUMARI

Trafficking in India takes place largely for commercial sexual exploitation, as well as for labor, organ transplants and forced marriages, says the UN office on Drugs and Crime, though it adds there are no reliable statistics on victims.

There are historical reasons as well for the trade.

"Women used to be a part of the loot of the local warrior tribe and have always been treated as objects," said researcher Shafique Rahman, who interviewed scores of Mewati women for a research paper for advocacy group Anjuman.

A woman brought from outside this region is called a "paro" which roughly translates as outsider, but has become a pejorative, harsh one.

"Every paro here has been sold on several occasions for four years," said Gandotya, the chief of a local women's group who herself was brought for marriage from southern Hyderabad city several years ago.

"People here still call me a paro. Other women in the household would make me, calling me dark and fat when I first came here," she said.

Most men pay 3,000-20,000 rupees ($130-$514) for a bride, said Preet Kaur, executive director of anti-trafficking group Shakti Vahini, which says it has rescued some 200 paro women in the past five years. AFP

WHAT'S INSIDE
Tiger chases after Ernie / A29

SPORTS
Editor Tobbysin S. Melendres Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Delos

Red Bull, Alaska square series

By Jun Navarro

FOR A TORTUROUS STRETCH IN OVERtime, the momentum nervously shifted from one team to the other with the regularity of a pendulum's.

Then, Colins Cruz broke the monotony.

Cruz buried a dagger of a three-pointer that turned the tide in favor of Red Bull on the way to subduing Purefoods, 97-88, and forcing their semifinal series in a best-of-three affair last night in the Smart PBA Philippine Cup at the Cuneta Astrodome.

With both teams throwing bricks in overtime, Cruz's triple halted a dull, scoreless twenty-minute three minutes and triggered a scoring barrage that paved the way for the Bandz to win the series after four games.

"The longer the series goes, the better for us," said Red Bull coach Siot Tanuan. "I don't know what happened to James Yap but we're lucky he wasn't there."

Pulled out late in the first period because of an injury, Yap was never fielded back again.

Alaska moved what could have been a deep 1-3 hole in the series after defeating Sta. Lucia Realty, 93-80, to level the other best-of-seven semifinal encounter late in the night.

The Ates Realtors had been overcome with an attitude crippled by what Alaska coach Tim Cone referred to as a "disrespectful" misschedule by Sally Williams in the waning seconds of a Sta. Lucia victory in Game 2.

RED Bull's Topex Robinson dives to control possession off Purefoods' Chico Lanete in the fourth quarter of their eight-game series at the Cuneta Astrodome. The Bandz leaned on a big-go-ahead triple by Colins Cruz to finally hold off the Purefoods Star Hotshots, 4-3, in their semifinal series.

Cone and Ibrahim head coach Siot Tanuandon dispensed with the traditional post-game handshake for the second straight match, heightening the drama for Wednesday's do-or-die clash in Game 5.

The Giants strolled their first 11 attempts in overtime as they slowly struggled without Yap.

Purefoods team physician Sally Sanchez said Yap suffered a contusion on his left knee but is good for Wednesday's Game 5.

The Giants could have snatched a 2-1 series lead but failed to snap a drive by Cyrus Baguio in the last 1.3 seconds, one that forced overtime at 86-all.

Bata, Django, Alcano head P1-M QC Open 9-ball cast

BATA

ALCANO

FORMER WORLD CHAMPIONS EDEN "Bata" Reyes, Alex Pagulayan and Ronnie Alcano and former world No. 1 Francisco "Django" Bustamante will join it up with foreign holders and aspirants in the 1st Quezon City Open 9-ball tournament next month.

After sending notice to the $22,000 (about P1 million) tournament, the first by the newly-formed Billiards Managers and Players Association of the Philippines, are 2005 World Pool Championship runner-up Roberto Gomez, reigning national titlist Lee Van Corteza and Dennis Orcollo.

ESCP, pool organizer to answer allegations

BY CHOLO D. TALUSAN, DELLAVEN MEO
Deputy Secretary of the Philippines and Asia Sports will hold a joint press conference today to answer allegations raised against them by a group of professional players and managers.

Local sports governing body will also call the Philippine Billiards Development Foundation, the 2006 SunMiguel Asian Pool Tour and the ESP 10-Ball Open at the Pavilion Restaurant in Manila starting at 11 a.m. **Marlon Bernardino, Contributor**

The SMBAP said the event kicks off a series of tournaments it is planning to hold in key cities around the country.

Qualifying tournaments for the QC Open are slated March 12 to 16 in various billiards halls across the country.

Cue stars from the country's three biggest stables—Paint Sports, Bugay Promotions and the Segue Billiards Stable—are expected to compete for the top prize of $1,2,000.

Bugay Promotions head and tournament co-organizer Perry Mariano said the main draw will be held at the Side Pocket Billiards Hall in Quezon Avenue, Pasay. Skybowl in Cubao, and Ilo Ilo Sports City in Ilo Ilo City.

The semifinals and finals are scheduled at the Trinoma Mall on North Edsa.

The qualifying tournaments will be held in major cities, including Cebu, Davao and Bacolod.

The tournament, open to local and foreign players, is expected to draw 100 players due to its minimum entry fee.

Darchinyan to protest draw verdict vs Gorres

By Edwin L. Legaspi Jr., Contributor

VIC DARCHINYAN AND HIS AMERICAN PROMOTER GARY SHAW YESTERDAY vowed to lodge a formal protest with the International Boxing Federation (IBF) following his controversial draw verdict with Filipino Z Gorres at Waterfront Hotel in Cebu City.

Judge Manuel Javier[illegible] of Thailand scored it 113-112 for Gorres, Fil-Australian Larry Hazzard's controversial draw verdict with Filipino Z Gorres at Waterfront Hotel in Cebu City.

Judge Manuel Javier[illegible] of Thailand scored it 113-112 for Gorres, Fil-Australian Larry Hazzard scored it 114-112 for Darchinyan and Aussie judge Guy Nelson ruled it a draw 113-113.

Shaw said he would base the protest on the nonstoppage of referee Lance Revill and some other fight officials after the initial discussing of referee following the referee's disputed call in the first round.

After Gorres was given a mandatory count in that round, the crowd—obviously feeling it was a slip—began pelting the ring with coins and plastic water bottles.

The referee had never done a stupid title fight outside New Zealand," Shaw was quoted as saying. "I think he felt the pressure of the hostile environment in the first round and it affected the way he officiated the next 11 rounds, winning two close knockdowns.

"I think it also affected the Thai judge who scored the 10th and 11th rounds (for Gorres) which were clearly Vic's rounds on the scorecards of the other officials."

Shaw said he "didn't know how the Australian judge could see the fight over."

Darchinyan's trainer, Billy Hussein, told the website Sportsnet he was completely baffled by the result.

"How do you knock a guy down four or five times and not get the win?" he said. "Of course he (Darchinyan) had done enough to win."

As the first round ended, the pelting ensued and Hussein was hit on the head by a plastic bottle thrown from the stands.

Gorres and Announcer Boxrl chairman Bobasin, who personally guaced the encounter, had to intervene and ask the crowd to stop hurling objects.

Gorres showed his lightpunch form in the seventh round when he landed a left hook on Darchinyan's face that sent the cocky Australian on his knees.

The Filipino failed to sustain the charge, however, and a headbutt in the ninth round opened a big gash on his forehead.

Bleeding from the eye, Gorres absorbed a right punch in the ninth round and went down for the second time.

The two fighters traded in toe-to-toe slugfests in the 10th, although Gorres appeared to be fading more by the 11th.

The split draw was the first in Darchinyan's career. The former IBF flyweight champion who lost his title to Filipino Nonito Donaire last year owns a 29-1 record, including 23 KOs.

Gorres is now 27-2-2 with 15 inside the distance.

Despite the morning, one of the fight officials said that Revill and a member of Team Darchinyan almost came to blows at the hotel lobby after breakfast. Darchinyan paralled the two.

Elite Nonito, who manages Darchinyan, said any rematch would happen anywhere except in the Philippines, although they doubted Gorres would want to fight his boxer again.

Gorres' manager Aldubel Aldegore was quoted as saying that his ward is open to a rematch.

VIC Darchinyan stands over a fallen Z. Gorres as referee Lance Revill (left) insists on. Revill later called it a knockdown, instead of a slip. (Jerome Ciano/U. Nolan)

Southern Ladies golf: Ikeda guns for 3rd title

IKEDA

Winter in hell for RP boxing

BARE EYE

Ricardo Zulueta

SAIGON—THEY CALL THIS PERIod of the year winter in Thailand, but that's not easy to buy.

You see, this sizzling tropical paradise, together with nearby Philippines, has only two seasons: wet and dry.

Winter? OK, they may have had snow in them parts but, if ever, this must've happened way, way back during prehistoric times.

There's hardly anything remotely resembling cold in the nation.

Well, it's now steaming, not humid so it's usually in during the sweaty months of March, April and May.

Mornings now are cool and pleasant, a tonic if breeze blows occasionally from the northeast, but the perfect time of day to go out and dine in the open is still after sundown, when there's no glare from the sunny brightness, when there's supposed relaxation in the air.

* * *

No winter here, if at all, this must be spring, his jackets, please. It's mainly shorts-and-slipper weather all the long.

There's the chance of slight drizzle in the morning, no thunder in the cold front, but this is also the time when guests, mainly from Europe who escape deathly chill in their countries, clog the immigration desks at the airport, 24 hours a day.

Tourists are special people down here and you seldom hear of a visitor being mugged or complaining.

There's a whole happy package in enjoy hotic profusion: cool pastoral temples, ruins, floating markets, live shows, sex tours, underprivileged sex, fishing, massage parlors, sex-sexier, great shopping and, yes, clubbing traffic lends more colorful by ever-smiling hosts.

Most of the world-famous tsc tsc, three-wheeled open pedestrian transport, have become a big hassle, but you're advised to take this with a grain of salt.

There's always the legit, metered air-conditioned taxi you turn to.

* * *

Report, it's not winter, contrary to what you're bound to be told.

The Emerald Building at Wat Phra Kao, said to be the single largest piece of jade in the world, has yet to dead its dark cloak of pure gold, its divine winter attire.

If there's a hint of snow, this must be the shredded ice in restaurants, there to keep fresh the marine offerings displayed in the open, or in fancy beer glasses.

Weather-wise this, your spicy meat be spring. Cherry blossoms of the tsu rise loud abroad.

There's love in the air and his could also be close to Valentine's.

* * *

So, are you sports fans out there ready to celebrate love, too?

Not your reporter here; got carried away and inconvenitently forgot to beg forgiveness for having lost you to believe that the IP boxing hosts that accepted have had stood an even chance of scoring big.

This comes late, long after the five-man footie—of pesh form, as observed by its leader—has been wiped out, the first four getting kicked in the butt right in their first bouts.

Remember what the IBF delegation head, who brought two observers with the squad, had' really claimed? They would land no less than two olympic slots from here?

Remember how the guy prepared and ordered those so-called Class A boxers of his, in favor of the unusual method atmosphere who not surrendered in protest to lend up in the Southeast Asian Games/Boxing finals last December?

Other than favorite whipping boys, these once-hyped boxers have also become the laughing stock in the tournament.

* * *

Not to worry, the team leader assured, they would stand resignation in the next and last Olympic qualifying tournament in Kazakhstan next month.

This, that flows into the biggest problem.

If ever one or a couple of RP boxers managed to qualify from Kazakhstan, which itself becomes a virtual guarantee!, it could be no better than being the first winning frame.

Yes, they cannot be seen and come up with new RP fighters who could prove better than those who had failed here.

So, before it's too late, shouldn't these self-styled sports leaders be saying sorry for having led the country astray?

To cure these people, tuned in to conspiracy, have not realized it, they have just joined the RP dreams of an Olympic gold medal goodbye in this capital where winter turned into a swoon in hell for inferno, ill-prepared Filipino fighters.

* * *

BRIGHT HORRIS: We were told that the nurse of the psychother quite who ran off to SP boxing turn manager is Jr. Primes Assessories. The nurse physician o.Jr. Martin Gomez.)

Aunzo seven off NSW Am pace after a 70

AUNZO

PERTH: AUNZO SHOT A ONEunder par 71 and stood seven strokes off the pace at the start of the New South Wales Amateur Golf Championships at the Oatacre Hills layout in New South Wales, Australia Saturday.

Aunzo carded three birdies against two bogeys for his round at the par-71 layout, good for 27th place in a field of 156 players.

Rohan Blizard finished with a 65 to post a three-stroke lead over Luke Westwood, who had a disaster knocked-out-eight with a 67.

Dustin Brenton, winner of the Hong Kong Amateur Open last year, shot a 72.

The top 64 players after 36 holes will make the last two rounds.

Int'l cockers vie in Makati derby today

ONE-ON-ONE SHOWDOWNS PITting foreign cockers and their Filipino counterparts spice up the Makati International 4-Cock Derby today at the Makati Coliseum with some 80 matches lined up.

A minimum guaranteed prize of P3 million is at stake in the derby hosted by the PCI Sports and Entertainment Corp. and Cockers Unlimited. Rudy Salud and Pilipinas Co., which will also be held on Wednesday and Friday.

Pending the return on 1Malaysian Bill Hoare, who will team up soon with Reg. Jaja Arroyo and Mayor Jejoy Palmares, Richard Kelly and Chris Nesmith of Alabama, Ace Montemayor of Guam, Rhodri Sales of Japan and Jun Montagner of Saipan.

Participants who donate in power, Jay's World Slasher Cup will also hold their own fighters, among them Rhoy Enriquez, Gregorio Arevalo and Charlie Hao, Frank Boric and Greg Wales of Australia and Allan Stone.

The line also includes defending champion Ricky Valeda and Sali Mendoza of Tacal (Old Stone) and Ace Pascual of Laguna (Prince Ray).

Other cocker entries: Gary Kerin, Ray Brown, Joel Cruz, Ric Agustin, Jake Mendoza, Mayor Jejoy Palmares, Ace Montemayor, Rudy Salud, Jr., Jorge Sparks, Arthur Gutierrez, Rudolph Bernal, Mikey Andal, Hugh Ray, Frank Cortez, Ricky Valeda, Sali Mendoza, Ronnie Salazar, Tim Gutierrez, Ronnie Salazar, Tommy Gutierrez, Jose Gutierrez, Jr., Jorge Sparks, Arthur Gutierrez, Rudolph Bernal, Mikey Andal, Hugh Ray, Frank Cortez, Ricky Valeda, Sali Mendoza, Ronnie Salazar, Tim Gutierrez, Ronnie Salazar, Tommy Gutierrez, Jose Gutierrez, Jr.

SPORTSWATCH

Big Event 6-cocker kicks off

The Big Event 6-cocker derby today at the country's top cockers today as the much-awaited 1TOYOTA Big Event 6-Cock Derby gets going at the San Juan Coliseum.

The derby's one-day format, in which the champion will take home tonight, makes for exciting matches, according to pit manager Ramon Tiko.

Hobby cocks Cita and SLEC owner Rodolfo Fuentes will top the supporting members of the Gamefowl Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) and the Private Cockpit Cockers Association (PCCA).

According to Cita, 60 guaranteed gamecocks will be dueled among the participants.

Soriano keys Lady Eagles' 6th win over NU spikers

By Ramona S. Acosta

Tiger nails No. 6 in row

Closes out with 65 for 1-shot win

DUBAI—TIGER WOODS (AST) AN-other remarkable display by into the Dubai Desert Classic title on Sunday, his seventh victory in eight tournament appearances.

The world No. 1 started the day four shots adrift of leader Ernie Els but produced a trademark last-day charge as a seven-under-par 65 earned him a 14-under total of 274.

Woods, who romped to an eight-shot victory—his fifth straight—at the Buick Invitational in California last Sunday, celebrated like he had won a major championship after sinking a long, sliding, 30-foot putt for a birdie at the last.

His first at the water-guarded 18th earned the 12-time major champion the inched the tournament with the best back nine of the week, a six-under 31.

Woods went to the turn in 34 but a chip in birdie at the 12th got his game flowing and his burst of six birdies on the second half set a clubhouse target no one could match.

"I thought I had to shoot 30 on the back nine to force a playoff," Woods told Sky television. "I never ran there to do the best I could, shot 31 and that happened to be good enough."

German youngster Martin Kaymer was one stroke off in second place after a spectacular birdie-birdie-eagle finish gave him a 66.

Three-time champion Els, one shot behind Woods going to the 18th, dipped on a bogey to settle for third on 276 along with fellow South African Louis Oosthuizen.

Woods fired himself up with a magnificent approach shot to two feet at the first for birdie. He followed that with birdies at the third and fourth as he closed in within one shot of Els, who pursued his first two holes.

The world No. 1 has won his last five events dating back to the tail end of last year including an eight-stroke triumph in California last weekend when he opened up his 2008 campaign.

He led after the first two rounds in this European PGA Tour event but fell victim to a wayward drive in Saturday's third round (77) which left him four strokes behind leader Els (65) and three behind Stenson (68).

Els' previous wins here came in 1996, 2002 and 2005. *Reuters*

TIGER Woods plays his second shot on the third hole. He birdied the hole and the next to start his amazing rally. *AFP*

Sharapova hopes 'peace' will take her to Beijing

MOSCOW—MARIA SHARAPOVA is in the Middle East working on her own peace process hoping it will pave the way to Olympic gold in Beijing in August.

The Russian golden girl, the world's richest sportswoman, is spearheading her country's defense of its Fed Cup it do against Israel.

Montgomery Grove, too, she went to repair relations with Israeli tennis moms, many of whom have criticized her in the past for pulling out of the squad after being selected.

The 20-year-old insists that despite her recent and blissful, which to visit St. Petersburg, Florida, close to Disney, Sharapova has no personal interest in the Beijing games.

"The majority of us have a wonderful relationship. We do," said Sharapova who shed freebies Rasmussen and Anna Chakvetadze when she was invited to cheer the team on from the sidelines in the 2007 Fed Cup final win over Italy in Moscow.

"I don't know what you say, but we all went to team dinners. I wouldn't play in the final but there's options asked me to come and support them, and that's the least I could do," said Sharapova, who made her Fed Cup debut by blasting Tepi Oberley 6-3, 6-4, after teammates Olesia Dulkina had lost the first rubber against top Israeli player Shahar Peer, 6-0, 6-2, 6-2.

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Fredrik Joyce scored five goals as France rebounded from an opening loss to Switzerland to beat the United States, 7-4, in a men's field hockey Olympic qualifying Sunday.

Joyce kept alive France's slim hopes of winning the six-nation tournament. Four teams will qualify for August's Beijing Olympics.

The US last outfit two early goals but Joyce fired last outfit equalized on a penalty corner in the 22nd minute and a field goal one minute later to leave the teams tied 2-2 at halftime.

Meanwhile, Argentina beat Germany Argentina beat Trinidad and Tobago, 7-2, in its second-round match. *AFP*

SHARAPOVA: All's well

Bolivar, Fetalvero rule Milo Marathon kickoff stage

ALQUINO Bolivar hits the tape first (from left) by Batangas City Councilor Manny Martinez, city administrator Philip Barrajo and Manila MVP and Milo executive Pej Estrada.

By Steve Silva, Correspondent

DAGUPAN CITY—ALQUIN BOLIVAR TOPPED the opening leg of the 22nd National Milo Marathon here while Mercedes Manipol-Escalvero, the country's undisputed 10K queen, raked the women's side of the 21K race yesterday.

Bolivar, the Lucena City lug-meister last year, finished the qualifying run in one hour, 11 minutes and 12 seconds to bag the top purse of P30,000.

Jessie Ano of Davao City came in second in 1:12:58 while Darwin Lee finished third in 1:13:47.

"I had a good run because the route was OK," the 22-year-old Bolivar from Cagayan de Oro told reporters in Filipino as the finish line.

Escalvero recorded several firsts yesterday she used her married name for the first time, joined her maiden Milo race, and was the first female to barge into the overall top 10 of a qualifying race.

"Actually, mixed ako (I got married in) 2000. Joyce lang Manipol pa rin ang ginamit ko sa (but I still used Manipol during the) SEA Games dahil hindi ko pa nagpapalit sa (because that's what was indicated in my) passport," explained Escalvero, who married a trader based in San Agustin, Bohol.

Escalvero's time of 1:16:01 placed her sixth overall while finishing miles ahead of Gemma Salcedo (1:30:16) and Elsie Tolentino (1:43:11).

Bolivar, a bronze medalist in the 10,000-meter run in the Southeast Asian Games in Thailand last December, has not lost a single 10K race since and since 1998.

She said she will train harder for the Milo Marathon's 42K grand finale set Nov. 30.

The top three finishers in the men's and women's races of the 21K advanced to the finals.

The top three finishers in the 5K fun run were Ramon Manansala (16:37), Nathan Gayoso (17:19) and Michael Roca (17:32) in the grade 6 division and Silyn Medic (21:36), Cinderella Agana (22:09) and Cheryl Tolentino (24:19) in the detail/none.

Topping the 2K run for kids were John Ilustrisimo and Joanna De Castro in the 6-9 age group and Christmar Castillo and Sheralin Olivo in the 10-12 category.

COMMENTARY

De la Hoya hies off; Roach sticks to Pacquiao

By Percy D. Dela

SACRAMENTO—FINISH THEM! ARE happening on the way to the Manchaby Bay Resort and Casino in Las Vegas tomorrow Manny Pacquiao fight. Jose Manuel Marquez for his super featherweight bid tomorrow March 15.

While the undercard builds for this pay-per-view bout pitting the Filipino ring superstar and the Mexican champ once more—Roach is demonic Barrera, who lost to both fighters, is hanging and in Marquez' tuvilla, right?

Well, hold the applause. Looks like the bald-back lifestyle in tropical Mexico is not suiting Marco at all.

Internet boxing circles are abuzz with talk that, despite his sweet and true of 70 career bouts, the 35-year-old Barrera is nothing an opponent.

His target date for a fight, says boxing blogger Andrew Hinds, is May or June.

Barrera's potential opponent? Current IBF champ Rhonzie Rose (who Shane Mosley stopped in two rounds in 2005).

Pacquiao-Marquez is a distant possibility for Barrera. But why is he seeking a return to the spotlight?

"Because he's a fighter and fighters are never truly retired, they are just in between fights," says Hinds.

The Marco caper is not the only perplexing piece of news that seems to go through Pacquiao.

Internet reports say Oscar De La Hoya has dumped trainer Freddie Roach to rejoin his old trainer for the final three fights of his career.

Floyd Mayweather Sr. will take charge of Oscar's ringside and physical calisthenics for the fights, which, oddly enough, include that with Mayweather's son, Floyd Jr.

Veteran sportswriter Kevin Iole of Yahoo Sports said De La Hoya had a pleasant conversation with Roach on Thursday to tell Freddie of his dismissal. Iole said De La Hoya handed Roach for the good training for his first fight with Floyd Jr., which he lost.

"I told him (Freddie) that I thought we could work together again, if not with he and I but with Golden Boy. I just didn't obey his commands [in the match against Mayweather]," Yahoo Sports quoted De La Hoya.

Iole also reported: "Roach's side was prepared to lose the De La Hoya gig anyway because Roach is training Manny Pacquiao for his March 15 rematch against Juan Manuel Marquez and is continuing beyond Hopkins for his April 19 bout with Joe Calzaghe. He's working with both Pacquiao and Calzaghe at his Wild Card Gym in Hollywood, California."

THE keepers of our great Olympic-style boxing legacy—silver medalists Anthony Villanueva and Onyok Velasco, who both inspired generations of ring hats—are probably vexed by the ruse.

And rightly so.

With our campaign for more Brin-quat flicts to Beijing in voters, these gentlemen need no scouting rhetoric (translation: we expect front leaders of our ill-fated team to Bangkok.

All these gentlemen desire is a ray of hope that Cherry can glance the mantle of their Olympic-style boxing (Northage announcement's false—if not this year maybe by the next Summer Games in London in 2012).

There is no doubt that the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines is committed to sending the first Filipino gold medal winner in the Olympics.

But the extraordinary demands of the Olympics call for a new generation of boxers and a new generation of leadership.

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SPORTS

Patriots try to put perfect ending to their season

New York faces giant task against New England

GLENDALE, ARIZONA—BUNKING in hand with history, the New England Patriots take the field Sunday night with a chance to go where no men in shoulder pads have gone.

Already the NFL's first 18-0 team, the Patriots will attempt to win their fourth Super Bowl in seven seasons when they kick off against the New York Giants in University of Phoenix Stadium.

On the heels of the Red Sox' World Series sweep of Colorado in October, Super Bowl XLII stands to endure as a signature event in the Boston sports renaissance of the 21st century.

Since September, the mantra for coach Bill Belichick and his players has been: "We're only thinking of our own opponents."

'Biggest game'

But amid the noise of Super Bowl week, a few veterans finally allowed themselves to acknowledge the possibility of perfection.

"I think it's the biggest game of all of our lives," admitted tight end Benjamin Watson. "I mean, anybody who has a chance to join Joe Montana and Terry Bradshaw as the only quarterbacks with four Super Bowl rings. "We're going to be remembering this game Joe as long as we live, win or lose. We're going to have great memories of this experience as we're going to look at it truly as a missed opportunity."

The Patriots are 12-point favorites as they attempt to become only the second team in NFL history to complete a season without a loss (the 1972 Miami Dolphins finished 17-0). The only struggle on New England's otherwise perfect résumé is a September sideswiping controversy in which Belichick and the Patriots were slapped with the largest penalties in league history after getting caught taping the signals of the Jets' assistant coaches.

Sunday night's game features clashes of quarterbacks, coaches, and cultures. Ready vs. Ill Manning, Belichick vs. Tom Coughlin, and Boston vs. New York.

Brady, who grew up in the Bay Area worshiping the iconic Montana (four rings with the San Francisco 49ers), flyers a league-record 50 touchdown passes during the regular season and directed an offense that shattered NFL marks for touchdowns and points. Twice named Super Bowl MVP, Brady's preparation for the Giants was hyperbolized by a high-right ankle sprain sustained in the AFC Championship game victory over the Chargers.

Manning is the younger brother of Patriots nemesis Peyton. Winning the veteran Indianapolis Colts quarterback who won the Super Bowl against the Chicago Bears last year, Eli Manning's path to greatness has been blocked by interceptions, poor decisions, and a perception that he lacks leadership and toughness. The younger Manning dwarfed his peers in the playoffs, leading the Giants to three road victories without throwing an interception.

The coaching matchup features Old School vs. Ancient School. Belichick is known as boundless, disciplined, and hard on his players.

MANNING

BRADY

History

The Patriots have a lot of players who have been here before. This will be Tedy Bruschi's fifth Super Bowl with New England. There are many Patriots with multiple rings, but this is a Super Bowl with coach's more at stake.

"This is about history," said 10-year veteran Junior Seau.

True to the finish, Belichick stayed on message.

"Right now, we are just thinking about trying to win this game and beat the Giants," the coach said in his final press conference Friday. "That is all we are thinking about."

After Sunday night, there will be no more opponent. Pfleet the roulette table, Belichick and his team will finally be able to exhale and tell us what they really think about this career in a lifetime season. NYTimes News Service

THE LARGE Roman numerals XLII are a fitting monument to the magnitude of the game that looms off in the University of Phoenix Stadium. Below, the Vince Lombardi trophy is sandwiched between helmets of the two Sunday protagonists. AP, FILE

NBA STANDINGS

Standings	W	L	PCT	GB
EASTERN CONFERENCE				
Atlantic				
Boston	36	8	.818	–
Toronto	25	21	.543	10.5
New Jersey	20	25	.444	15.5
Philadelphia	19	26	.422	16.5
New York	14	30	.318	20.5
Central				
Detroit	32	13	.711	–
Cleveland	28	20	.583	7.5
Indiana	19	26	.396	13.5
Chicago	18	28	.391	13.5
Milwaukee	14	30	.318	16.5
Southeast				
Orlando	31	14	.689	–
Washington	24	21	.533	5.5
Atlanta	23	23	.500	6.5
Charlotte	13	32	.313	15.5
Miami	9	36	.200	20.0
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Southwest				
New Orleans	32	14	.696	–
Dallas	31	14	.689	0.5
Sacramento	28	16	.636	2.5
Houston	21	20	.512	6.5
Memphis	13	30	.302	15.5
Northwest				
Utah	30	16	.652	–
Denver	28	18	.609	1.5
Portland	21	19	.525	5.5
Seattle	17	26	.395	11.5
Minnesota	11	30	.268	15.5
Pacific				
Phoenix	32	13	.711	–
L.A. Lakers	29	15	.659	2.5
Golden State	29	15	.659	2.5
Sacramento	17	24	.415	13.5
L.A. Clippers	13	30	.302	17.5

FVR joins Mango golf

FORMER PRESIDENT FIDEL V. Ramos and so many other compatriots and organization presidents rose to say with their respective partners starting Wednesday (Feb. 6) to the 24th edition of the Mango Tee, the members-guest tournament of the Alabang Country Club inside the posh Ayala-Alabang village.

A long-time member of the club, FVR teams up with Charles Oxford as they join VIPs like ACCI president Jun Gallardo, Rep. Marion Pastorwella, Finance Secretary Gary Teves, Philippine Stock president Edgar Chua and Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Inc. president Masahiko Sekai in leading the 329 member-guest teams competing in a 36-hole tourney spread over as five days.

Hole-in-one feats on the four par-3s will be rewarded with the four brand new Mitsubishi cars donated by Citimotors and MMPI.

A golf vast will be raffled off as the grand prize on Sunday.

Chiang Kai Shek nails Tiong Lian semis

CHIANG KAI SHEK COLLEGE FORMALIZED ITS CLAIM FOR AN ELIMINATION semis berth by downing Hope Christian High School, 91-62, even as host St. Jude High School snapped a three-game losing streak in the 32nd Milo Manila Tiong Lian basketball tournament Saturday at the 2002 High School gym. St. Jude outlasted St. Stephen, 46-40, to finish the eliminations at 9th, 6-with a 5-3 record. The Sunday Co-members of Chiang Kai Shek topped the eliminations via a no-game sweep. Xavier School, aiming to stop Chiang Kai Shek's reign in the tournament crowned up second at 5-1.

Patriots 38, Colts 34

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Patriots	7	14	7	10	38
Colts	3	14	7	10	34

Scoring summary

First quarter

NE—Maroney 1 run (Gostkowski kick), 9:38

IND—Vanden Bosch 1 fumble return (Vinatieri kick), 5:08

NE—Moss 6 pass from Brady (Gostkowski kick), 1:36

Second quarter

IND—Addai 1 run (Vinatieri kick), 14:54

NE—Moss 6 pass from Brady (Gostkowski kick), 11:03

IND—Addai 1 run (Vinatieri kick), 6:39

NE—Welker 5 pass from Brady (Gostkowski kick), 2:00

Third quarter

NE—Gostkowski 20 field goal, 8:55

IND—Harrison 13 pass from Manning (Vinatieri kick), 3:08

Fourth quarter

IND—Addai 1 run (Vinatieri kick), 14:54

NE—Moss 6 pass from Brady (Gostkowski kick), 11:03

IND—Addai 1 run (Vinatieri kick), 6:39

NE—Welker 5 pass from Brady (Gostkowski kick), 2:00

Football

English Premier League

Team	GP	W	D	L	Pts
Arsenal	25	18	6	1	60
Manchester United	25	18	5	2	59
Chelsea	25	16	6	3	54
Everton	25	13	5	7	44
Liverpool	24	11	10	3	43
Aston Villa	24	13	3	8	42
Manchester City	24	12	3	9	41
Blackburn	25	10	8	6	38
Portsmouth	25	10	8	7	38
West Ham United	24	10	6	8	36

Spanish Premier League

Team	GP	W	D	L	Pts
Barcelona	24	18	5	1	59
Valencia	24	17	5	2	56
Villarreal	24	15	5	4	50
Real Madrid	24	14	5	5	47
Deportivo	24	13	5	6	44
Racing Santander	24	12	5	7	41
Sevilla	24	11	6	7	39
Espanyol	24	10	6	8	36
Getafe	24	9	6	9	33
Valencia	24	9	6	9	33
Mallorca	24	8	7	9	31
Athletic Bilbao	24	8	6	10	30
Osasuna	24	7	7	10	28
Real Betis	24	7	6	11	27

'New Year' fireworks a dud as Rockets beat Bucks

NBA at 'TI (Basketball 'TI)

8:30 a.m.—Dallas Mavericks vs. Detroit Pistons

(Mavericks' 8.5%)-(-1)

11 a.m.—LA Lakers vs. Washington Wizards

(Washington 8.5%)-(+1)

MILWAUKEE—THE HOUSTON ROCKETS have the Milwaukee Bucks 97-83 on Saturday in a game featuring the second NBA matchup between Chinese players Yao Ming and Yi Jianlian.

With Milwaukee's seven-footer in an early Chinese New Year, neither Chinese player stood out in a game that was expected to be watched by a huge television audience in China.

Yao, hindered by first-half foul trouble and a slight ankle injury, scored just 13 points and made 12 rebounds.

Yi scored six points, under his season average of 9.7 points per game. He was 1-for-4 from the field.

"I thought maybe eight of his shots were pretty good shots, they just didn't go," Milwaukee coach Larry Krystkowiak said separately.

While attention was on the Chinese duo, Houston's Tracy McGrady registered 33 points, 11 rebounds and six assists to lead his side to their third successive win.

In Memphis, Tennessee, Utah extended its winning streak to eight games by crushing a disinterested Memphis, 130-95.

In Cleveland, LeBron James scored 38 points after coming in late in the third quarter with a sprained ankle, leading the Cavaliers over the LA Clippers, 98-84.

In Denver, Carmelo Anthony returned from an ankle injury to score 25 points as the Nuggets whipped the Charlotte Bobcats, 117-101.

In Indianapolis, Dwight Howard had 24 points and 22 rebounds as the Orlando Magic stopped the Pacers, 124-113, to stay five games clear atop the Southeast Division.

In Atlanta, the home team ended a three-game losing streak by beating New Jersey, 116-92.

The Hawks used a quick transition game to outscore the Nets 16-7 on fastbreak points in the second half.

HOUSTON'S Yao Ming (left) and Yi Jianlian of Milwaukee have a little conversation as they walk off the court at the end of their teams' match. AFP

New Jersey dropped to 2-18 since Jan. 11.

In Seattle, Kevin Durant shook off another poor shooting night to score 21 points, including a tiebreaking 3-pointer with 50 seconds left, as the SuperSonics edged New York, 86-83.

In Sacramento, California, Jim Jeter scored 28 points to help the Kings to a 105-101 victory over Chicago. AP, AFP

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INTEGRATED COMPUTER SYSTEMS, INC.

Peso seen hitting 39 to $1 this quarter

Citigroup economist predicts P35 to a dollar by year's end

By Doris C. Dumlao

GLOBAL BANKING GIANT Citigroup sees the peso surging further to 35 against the dollar by yearend and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas slashing its benchmark interest rate by 75 basis points to temper the influx of speculative offshore funds this year.

"The outlook is a very bullish peso and it's not just because of the (macroeconomic) fundamentals," Citibank economist for the Philippines Ann Tritsiliel told high net worth Citibank clients during an informal Chinese New Year party for Citigold members last week.

"It will be 35 to $1 by yearend and we're looking at 30 before the (first) quarter is over," he said.

Aside from the attractive interest rate differentials and the sustained influx of remittances from overseas Filipino workers, Tritsiliel cited the more than $43 billion in foreign exchange reserves amassed by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, which factored in about $30 billion in cash

P1|B4

IN THIS ISSUE

■ **RP eyes $600M** in policy dev't loans /B8
■ **UBS ups RP outlook,** cites high '07 growth /B7

Gov't readies sale of 70 ha. of FTI complex

By Amy R. Remo and Michelle V. Remo

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY ARTHUR C. Yap said he was making the privatization of the 126-hectare Food Terminals Inc. complex in Taguig City as the state-run Government Service Insurance System had offered P7 billion for the property.

Unlike shareholders of the Philippine Food Processors & Exporters Organization Inc. exhibit last week, Yap said Finance Secretary Margarito Teves had assured him that he would order the Privatization Management Office to immediately work on the FTI privatization.

"We want to sell [FTI] immediately and break it up into smaller clusters for prodoevs, but the economic managers instructed us to hold a bidding first," Yap said.

Another finance official said the government would initially sell 70 hectares of the 126-hectare property in Taguig City.

The 70 hectares of the FTI property, considered to be the most "The Fort," were identified to house businesses whose lease contracts will expire in less than a year. The rest are either housing tenants with long-term lease contracts or occupied by informal settlers, according to the Department of Finance.

The entire FTI property, earlier valued by the DOF at P15 billion, was identified as one of the assets to be privatized this year to help beef up government revenues. The government has set a target of generating an initial P50 billion from private investors of its various assets.

However, problems hounding some parcels of the property were seen to delay the planned sale, prompting the DOF to sell the portions of the land without legal problems.

GMY/B4

Earnings reports to dictate market's pace

THE MARKET IS EXPECTED TO BE INFLUenced by 2007 corporate earnings reports that are to be released starting this week following a month in market-moving news, analysts said.

Benjamin Lanuza & Co. said in a weekly report that investors might focus on companies reporting better-than-expected earnings.

Mobile-phone giant Globe Telecom Inc. is holding an analysts' briefing tomorrow to report its fourth quarter and 2007 earnings. Globe rival Ayala Land Inc. will also hold a similar briefing on Feb. 11.

Bank of the Philippine Islands has reported an 11-percent increase in net profit in 2007 on higher non-interest income. Consolidated net profit was P19 billion in 2007, compared with P9 billion in 2006.

"[This] week marks the start of the earnings reporting season. Much before the 20, the performance of the companies, especially blue-chips, will be released as soon as these hit the outlook of compa-

BA/B3

Earnings

... From page B1

rate for 2008 will also provide market targets with regard to the expected performance of the economy," said Peter Yeung, analyst at AB Capital Institutional.

"The market is expected to move sideways, much like this week. The local economy and the depressed prices of certain issues continue to present buying opportunities. However, gains will continue to be capped by the looming slowdown of the US economy," Yeung said. — E.S. Jansen

Assessing the US contagion

NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito

MODELS A US RECESSION IMPACT severely on the Philippine economy? Recent data suggest that our vulnerability via our exports is considerably less than what it would have been 10 years ago. Last week we cited figures showing that the US no longer dominates our merchandise export markets the way it used to. That diminished now belongs to China (including Hong Kong), which accounts for close to one-fourth of our exports. Given that merchandise exports account for around 40 percent of our GDP, a quick calculation tells us that a 10-percent drop in our US sales would directly chip off 4.7 percent from our GDP. With our reported 7.3-percent GDP growth last year, this would be a relatively small dent, and hardly threatens to push us into a recession (i.e., negative growth) ourselves.

Hit on BPOs

Although they would be our strongest link to the US economy, merchandise exports obviously don't give the complete picture. What's also would a US recession hit us, then? Services exports, foreign direct investments, and remittances are the other items to look into, as I did a little research and some simple arithmetic on the numbers involved.

Lately, we hear anecdotes about call centers and other business process outsourcing (BPO) facilities being hit by the US slowdown. This industry probably now dominates our services exports to the US, which all together account for 7 percent of our GDP. Here, the US is indeed the dominant market, accounting for 69.86 percent of the business, according to the Business Process Association of the Philippines (BPAP). A 10-percent drop in earnings from the US would take away another 0.63 percent from our GDP. Adding the 0.7 percent above, total impact so far is 1.33 percent of GDP.

FDI impact

What about the effect on the investment side? According to Bangko Sentral data, the US accounted for 30 percent of total equity investments that entered the country from January to October last year. Japan, the biggest source, accounted for 43 percent. But this was apparently an unusual year. The US share was 17 percent in 2006, 23 percent in 2005, and 10 percent in 2004. Averaging these shares from the last three years, I would put the normal US share at about 23 percent.

Foreign direct investments made up about 13 percent of our total fixed capital investment spending in 2006. Using this ratio, the US share in our total investment expenditures would be roughly 3.0 percent.

Given that fixed capital investment accounts for about 14 percent of our GDP, the only number that's 10-percent drop in US direct investments in the Philippines would reduce our GDP by a mere 0.04 percent. That brings our cumulative 1.37 percent of GDP

Remittances

The remaining major element would be remittances, and statistics from BSP show the US accounting for the biggest share, with 31 percent. But this probably overstates the amounts sent by US-based Filipinos, as the data reportedly include remittances originating from somewhere else but coursed through US banks.

Total remittances last year were approximately P342 billion ($15 billion at P43 to a dollar). Assuming an average personal saving rate of 12 percent, 88 percent of this or P457 billion would have gone to personal consumption expenditures (PCE), which was 58.3 percent of total personal PCE in 2007. The US share, then, was 31 percent of 10.3 percent, or 3.2 percent of total PCE, which in turn made up 66 percent of GDP.

Roughly then, a 10-percent drop in remittances from the US would amount to about 0.27 percent of our GDP. Total impact so far from a downturn across the board drop in our US business: 1.59 percent of GDP. This is remarkably close to the separate Neda estimate of a 1.76-percent reduction in our GDP growth rate with a one-percent drop in US GDP. My calculations are based on a 1.6-percent drop in our inflow from the US, which is probably a fair estimate of what a one-point US recession would translate to.

Other influences

What else haven't we captured? A reader wrote in to point out that if our other dollar earners, particularly overseas Filipinos, also slow down as a result of a US recession, then that would further dampen our economy. But the key here is that Japan, China and Europe are expected to merely slow down, i.e., still grow, but at a slower rate. Thus, the continued order of items on (a) will not be as strong as the direct impacts assessed above. There are also further second order impacts from the cross-effects among various sectors of the economy. My Ph.D. dissertation built a computer model of our economy to permit assessments of such cross-sectoral interactions, but I haven't been able to use it for the analysis so far.

There are two other things to consider. One, a US recession may not even happen, a more slowdown is more likely. Ed say economist is unlikely guess that it's an election year there and both the government and the Fed are moving heaven and earth to avert it. Two, I would not even rule out the possibility, no matter how remote, that our GDP growth

No Free Lunch

From page B2

would manage to stay above 7 percent this year. Private investment spending has been so sluggish lately that merely restoring it to recent nominal levels seen in the past could very well provide the kick needed to offset the effects of a US recession. I guess the $64-dollar question remains: how do we do it?

Comments are welcome at chalito@pantas.edu

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Property firm defers stock rights offer plan

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

ANOTHER COMPANY HAS DEFERRED its rights offer plan amid the global financial environment.

In a letter to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) last Friday, hotel chain owner Boulevard Holdings Inc. chair Jose Marcel Bautista said the company was withdrawing its application to register 500 million shares for a rights offering filed last March due to the "global equity crisis."

Bautista earlier planned to raise additional funds within the first quarter of this year.

In February 2007, stockholders approved a plan to increase the authorized capital stock of the company from P500 million to P1 billion, divided into 50 billion shares at 10 centavos each. The implementation of the increase in capital, first to P200 million from P100 million, will involve an assignment of a Puerto Galera property in exchange for 30 million shares, and the holding of a stock rights offer for the remaining 50 million unsubscribed shares. After this, the number of PS 1 billion would be offered, the company said in previous financial reports filed with the PSE.

Boulevard Holdings is owned and controlled by the Pauilin Group of Companies, the owners of the biggest local chain of hotels and resorts in the Philippines. Its investments in the tourism sector is through Fridays Holdings Inc., the owner and operator of Fridays Resort Island Beach Resort in Boracay Island, 400m.

Aside from hotels and resorts, the company also has investments in information and technology.

Boulevard Holdings' announcement followed that of low-cost airline Cebu Air Inc., which decided to shelve indefinitely its public offering of 1.25.5 million shares as it was wounded by the recent meltdown in global markets.

In an earlier disclosure to the stock exchange, Cebu Air, more popularly known under its trade name Cebu Pacific, said that it decided to "postpone until further notice" its proposed IPO, which aimed to raise some P12.9 billion, "given the extreme volatility in global equity markets."

Blames 'global equity crisis'

Gov't readies sale of 70 ha. of FTI complex

From page B1

"It is better that the area is cleared before the government sells a property to really interest buyers," Finance Undersecretary Cesar Lopez said Friday.

Lopez said the DOF has yet to come up with a valuation for the 70-hectare portion of the FTI property.

Asked whether the government will sell the property to Government Service Insurance System, Lopez said the DOF had to go through the process of competitive bidding to determine to "whom should the asset be sold."

As the base agro-industrial-commercial estate in Bicutan-Manila, the FTI complex hosts more than 300 small- to medium-scale companies engaged in food manufacturing, electronics, garments production and services. The land is estimated to be worth about P20,000 a square meter.

Top earlier said that proceeds of the sale would be invested in "regional processing centers because farmers in the provinces need drier centers more than we in Manila do."

The centers would be put up in South Mindanao, Davao, Northern Mindanao, Western Visayas, Eastern Visayas, Northern Luzon and Central Luzon.

ICTSI, ATI, Harbour Centre vie for terminal

By Ria T. Ocmandra

LISTED INTERNATIONAL Container Terminal Services Inc., Asian Terminals Inc. and Harbour Centre Port Terminal Inc. are vying for the 25-year contract to manage and operate the Manzanillo International Container Terminal (MICT), according to current MCT operator, Philippine Industrial Authority (PIA).

Harbour Center Port Terminal Inc., which plans to sell shares this year to generate some P3 billion to fund port acquisitions, is bidding for the MCT contract with Singapore-based Overseas Port Manage- ment Pte. Ltd.

The Philippine Ports Authority said ICTSI, ATI and Harbour Center were the only firms that met the Jan. 28 deadline for submission of bids for the MCT.

PIA is privatizing the management and operation of MCT, which is said to be the most modern port facility in Mindanao, to attract more direct callers and increase cargo traffic in the port.

Located along the Macajalar Bay in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, MCT is seen as a catalyst to economic and industrial development of Metro Cagayan de Oro and Northern Mindanao.

MCT currently has four regular callers: Maersk, National Marine Corp., Lorenzo Shipping Corp. and MEC Transport, the joint venture between Maersk and the Aboitiz Group's shipping unit.

According to the terms of reference, bidders should have a minimum paid-up capital of P1 million.

The minimum bond concession fee for the contract is P2.341-billion.

This is the PIA's third attempt to privatize the MCT after two failed bids, the last one held in 2003.

The contract will be awarded to the winning bidder on March 31.

Phase I of MCT, with an annual capacity of 370,000 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs), is designed to serve full-container and semi-container vessels.

It is equipped with two quayside gantry cranes with a productivity of 20 moves an hour, four rubber-tired gantries, a 6-hectare container yard with a stacking capacity of 6,000 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs).

It can accept vessels up to 30,000 dead weight tons.

Last year, MCT handled some 93,000 to 50,000 TEUs, 25-30 percent more than the previous.

Mango output seen dropping 20% in 2008

By Arny R. Barros

MANGO PRODUCTION IS EXPECTED TO drop 20 percent this year to 800,000 due to the adverse effects of global warming and rising production costs.

Roberto C. Ancuta, president of the Philippine Food Processors and Exporters Organization Inc., said last week that intermittent rain during the traditional dry season is not good for mangoes.

Pitch was blamed on global warming, the planting season, which traditionally runs from November to May has become shorter thus adversely affecting production, Ancuta said on the sidelines of the 7th Philippine Food Expo held last week.

Consequently, mango output this year is expected to fall short of last year's volume of one million metric tons.

Adding to producers' woes is the rising cost of raw materials, such as fertilizers, pesticides and other chemical inputs, which are largely imported.

"Despite the appreciation of the peso by 20 percent last year, the cost of imported production inputs has risen by 25 percent," Ancuta said.

But despite the expected drop in production, the industry was heartened by the prospect of shipping mangoes to mainland United States, Guam and Hawaii on Feb. 15, its first batch for the year.

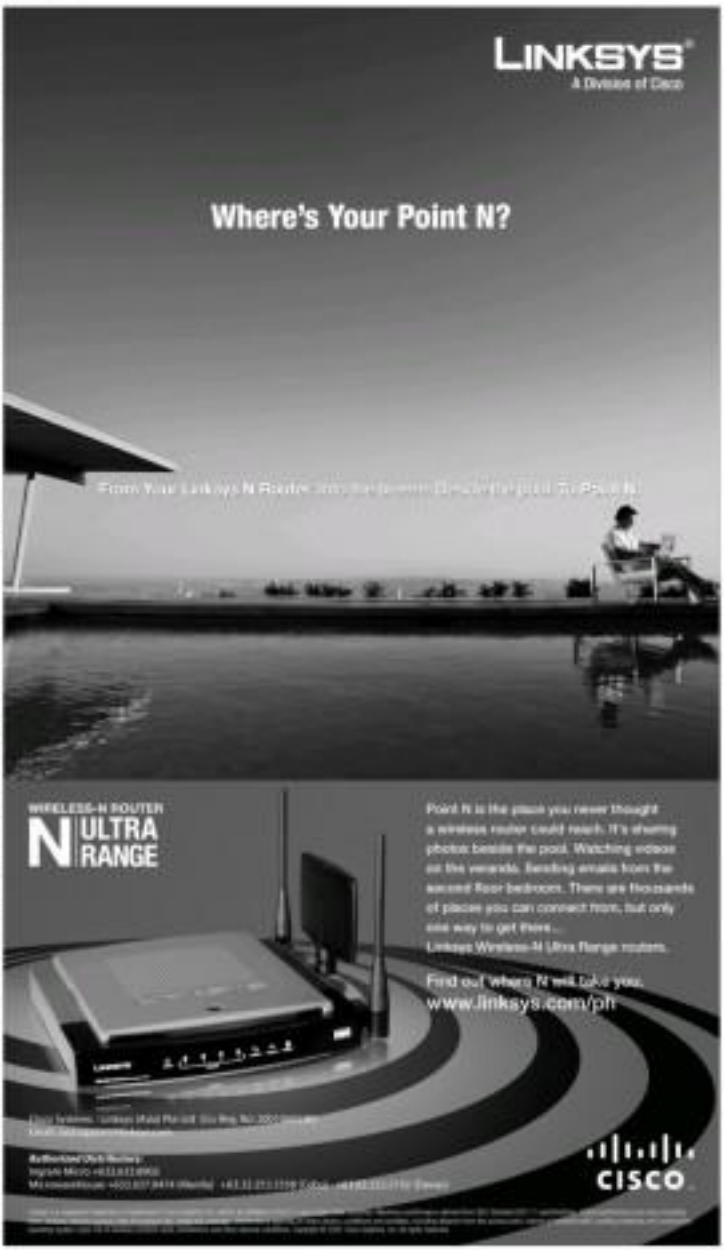
At the exhibit, Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap also assured mango and other fruit exporters that the government would assist the industry by shouldering all quarantine expenses and promotional costs during trade and food exhibits.

Last December, Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap also pledged to invest in Department's crops, particularly mango.

Bangasinan is the country's top mango producer, accounting for 44 percent of total production.

The Department of Agriculture provided mango drying and Extended Out Shave Treatment (EOST) facilities to the province.

The EOST facility would enable producers to comply with the phytosanitary requirement imposed by the Chinese government and possibly export mangoes to Hong Kong and mainland China.



RP eyes $600M in policy dev't loans

World Bank, ADB and JBIC to contribute $200M each

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT IS POISING on the second tranche of the development policy loan (DPL) amounting to $600 million from multilateral donors World Bank, Asian Development Bank and Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

The DPL 2, which is targeted for disbursement this year, is a follow-up to the budgetary support loans worth $500 million, provided last year by the World Bank and the ADB, which contributed $150 million each.

For nine years, government sources said the World Bank, ADB and JBIC were keen on committing $200 million each to the DPL 2.

DPL is a quick-disbursing direct budgetary support loan, an incentive given by multinational lenders to governments that have made substantial progress in fiscal reforms.

The country qualified for the DPL following a significant improvement in its fiscal position, particularly after the implementation of the value-added tax reform.

"We're now assessing the performance of the first DPL by February or March, we should know [the lenders' first commitment]," a government source said.

The World Bank has envisioned two new DPLs for the Philippines—one for 2008 and the other for 2009—to support key priorities of its country assistance mark to fiscal consolidation, improved governance and enhanced investment climate.

The new DPLs will focus on ensuring that sound fiscal policy is maintained and institutional reforms deepened in the revenue-enhancing agencies, public expenditure management and the fiduciary environment. The DPLs will also support measures to strengthen infrastructure, the business-enabling environment and competition.

The World Bank's lending volumes remained tied to fiscal performance, whereas the composition of new loans would be determined on the basis of reform intensity in different policy areas.

Strong governance filters were installed so that only operations with adequate governance and anti-corruption safeguards will be considered under a $2.3-billion lending envelope earmarked by the World Bank for the country in the next two years.

The plant will likewise provide additional power to Atlas Mining in the Toledo-Balamban area, the Tsuneishi Heavy Industries shipbuilding facility and the Metagbol International machine fabrication company.

Cebu's onstream power is pitched was placed at 400 MW, up 9 percent from last year to give power from Leyte through submarine transmission cables.

Global Power president Jesus Arteche said the plant is ready to supply power to Negros and Panay Islands.

Aboitiz Holdings Inc., a joint venture between Aboitiz Power and Vicsal, will own 44 percent of the facility, while Global Power Inc., a partnership between Global Business and Northern, will hold a 56-percent stake.

Fortisons will serve as engineering, procurement and construction contractor as well as technical partner for the power plant.

Abigail L. Hu

FINANCE Secretary and LandBank chair Gaso B. Teves and Smart chief wireless advisor Orlando B. Vea (second and third from left) at the recent launch of the LandBank DFW Cash Card, which is powered by Smart Money. This will enable Filipino workers, especially those in the Middle East, to send remittances to their beneficiaries in the Philippines via SMS-based service anytime, anywhere at the speed of a text message and for as low as P5 in bank charges. A roaming charge of P20 and a value-added service (VAS) fee of P2.50 are charged against the sender's airtime load per text transfer. Also in the photo are LandBank president and CEO Gilda E. Pico (left) and Smart's public affairs head Ramon R. Isberto (extreme right).

Construction of new Cebu power plant starts

METROBANK GROUP SUBsidiary Global Business Power Corp., Formosa Heavy Industries Corp., Aboitiz Power Corp. and Vivant Power Corp. have finally started the construction of a 300-megawatt coal-fired power plant in Toledo City, Cebu.

In a statement, the four member consortium said it had already broken ground for the plant and that it was scheduled for completion and commissioning in the first quarter of 2010.

The 264-megawatt (MW) power plant would use circulating fluidized bed clean coal technology which, the consortium said, would ensure that sulfur oxide and nitrogen oxide emissions from the generating facility would meet World Bank standards.

Once operational, the plant is expected to help meet Cebu's growing power demand, in light of the influx of business process outsourcing firms, new hotels and large-scale mines in the province.

Petron to start selling gas with ethanol this year

INDUSTRY LEADER PETRON CORP. IS EXpected to start offering ethanol-blended gasoline within the year, ahead of the mandated implementation of the 5-percent ethanol blend by 2009.

Petron president Kamal Al-Yahya said he of this would start selling gasoline with a 10-percent ethanol blend within 2008, even if it would have to source the ethanol from abroad.

"We've been on starting the ethanol mix with gasoline. We plan to beat the mandate for the program by meeting it this year," he said. "As much as possible, we want to source everything locally, but if that's not possible, then we'll just import."

Right now, he said the company was already working on preparing up a blending facility for gasoline, which should be up and running within the year.

The country currently has no commercial ethanol supplier. Oil firms, such as found Philippines Inc., which already offer ethanol-blended gasoline get their ethanol supply from overseas, such as notably Brazil.

Petron has signed a memorandum of understanding with San Carlos Bio-Energy Inc. for its ethanol supply.

San Carlos Bio-Energy is currently putting up an integrated facility that will have a cane milling plant with a distillery capacity of 3,000 metric tons of sugarcane a day.

Abigail L. Hu

PlantersBank sells ₱1.8B worth of assets

PLANTERS DEVELOPMENT Bank sold P1.8 billion worth of bad assets to a subsidiary of Singapore-based Oaktree Capital Management Pte. Ltd.

In an interview with the bourse on Friday, Plantersbank chair and CEO Jesus Tambunting said the NPV transaction was closed at a discount of 65.25 percent, lower than the 66.66 percent agreed the month prior by seller banks to previous bulk unloading of sound loans and foreclosed properties.

The discount meant that for every P1 worth of assets sold, Plantersbank booked a gain of about 35 centavos. The buyer was the Star group, a unit of the African bank which is active in buying bad assets from local banks.

The DPF Law gives fiscal incentives to bulk transfer of assets to encourage banks to clean up their balance sheet after accumulating bad assets since the Asian crisis of 1997. The law is clear about creditors or debtors some of the loans usually collateral in the sale or transfer of assets.

The gains from the transaction, which was completed through a negotiated sale, was recognized before the bank closed its 2007 books. It slashed Plantersbank's non-performing loans as a ratio of total loans by 3 percentage points to 12 percent.

Since 2005, Tambunting said Plantersbank had implemented a five-year plan that called for reducing its non-performing loans and to benefit 2005 as well as an increase in profitability.

Plantersbank, which is capitalized at P5.5 billion, has a total asset base of P62 billion or already equivalent to the bank's medium-sized commercial bank. Its total deposit base stood at P50 billion of which over a third consisted of low-cost deposit accounts.

Its loan portfolio stood at about P25 billion as of end-2007, up by 9% billion over a year ago. About 60 percent of its portfolio was devoted to SMEs.

Tambunting said Plantersbank whose assets range from P4 million to P5 million. "Those with assets of below 35 million are considered a microenterprises, while firms with assets of P15 million to P100 million are medium-scale.

Tambunting said Plantersbank's strategy was to focus its some 98 million peso borrower while the loan ranges ranged from three years to five years.

In 2007, the bank posted a net profit of P108 million versus P279 million in 2006. For the first quarter, the bank is targeting profit growth of 20 percent. Doris C. Dumlao

No tariff hike, no rate reduction–Meralco

By Abigail L. Hu

UNLESS IT GETS APPROVAL for a tariff increase from the Energy Regulatory Commission, Manila Electric Co. may not be able to offer any more rate discounts to its consumers.

"The Petition component of the monthly discount is already very low. We're still working a rate hike more than anyone possible to [discuss our distribution charges further]," Meralco president and chief operating officer Oscar Reyes said.

In a presentation during last week's Energy Summit, he said that of Meralco's total monthly billing to customers, 59 percent of the bill or 56 centavos per kWh, were for generation.

This, he said, was a pass-through charge so Meralco did not earn anything from the generation charge. This served as payment for the power that Meralco obtained from Section 34 Power Corp., the wholesale electricity spot market and its independent power producers.

Other maneuverable components of the Meralco bill are the transmission charge, which makes up 12 percent of the total or 9% centavos per kWh; systems loss, 8 percent of the bill or 56 centavos per kWh, and the taxes and universal charges, 9 percent of the total bill or 66 centavos per kWh.

The base pass-through charges made up 87 percent of the total monthly charges, Francisco said, leaving only 13 percent, or 91 centavos per kWh, for Meralco's distribution charges.

"Our costs still looking at other ways to keep [our] overall charges, particularly for targeted segments, like those in the upper business," he said.

He said Meralco was looking at changing the way it computed its pass-through charges to enable it to provide more competitive rates to manufacturers and exporters.

"We won't be able to reduce distribution charges for them, but we may be able to come up with a scheme that even lowering down options less charges for a certain customer segment. That will be subject to the approval of the ERC," he said.

Another way to reduce power rates for exporters would be to ask the government to remove the cost from Meralco's low-cost private generator for a particular billing month, he said, instead of computing their generation charges based on the average for all of Meralco's power suppliers for the month.

Again, this would be subject to the approval of the ERC, he said.

Maybank

Peso seen hitting 39 to $1 this quarter

From page B1

looked up to currency swaps and not yet booked as part of the BSP's official gross international reserves (GIR).

"Those are dollars that they have brought from the market and swapped for pesos to get the liquidity arising from the stock market [meltdown last] offshore investors," Ito, in short, those are the dollars that they must unwind will get back into market or two months from now and swap back from peso, which they have not booked to their regular dollar book," Trinidad said.

The country's GIR stood at an all-time high of $33.7 billion in 2007 up against the $33.59 billion close year before. This GIR is a key indicator of a country's ability to cover the for eign exchange requirements of its economy, consisting of the central bank's gross foreign currency holdings, gold reserves, foreign investments and special drawing rights from the International Monetary Fund.

"This stock of dollars is one of the reasons why with or without a US recession or with or without the $20 federal reserve cuts on, expect why with $34-$35 billion remittances still coming in that will still appreciate this stock of dollars," Trinidad said.

The economist said the stock did not even include the pool of dollars generated by the banking system's foreign currency deposit units (FCDUs), considered as a third layer of the country's foreign reserves.

As of end-2007, the banking system's FCDU deposit liabilities increased to $16.26 billion from the previous year's $17.7 billion.

He said part of the large dollar position held in turn be used to further pare down the country's foreign debt and improve the Philippine sovereign credit rating, which already got a strong boost recently from the "positive" outlook its basis for potential upgrades in the next 12 to 24 months given by credit watchdog Moody's Investor Service.

Trinidad added that the current level of domestic interest rates was also providing attractive differentials versus low-yielding assets abroad, especially with the 325-basis point cutbacks by the US Federal Reserve to benchmark interest rates in the last 12 months, he said.

"You may not have the appetite to go out into your peso bonds now but compared to two-year investment, you're better off holding the [peso] bonds," he said.

But Trinidad said the BSP would likely take its cue from the US Fed by cutting its own benchmark rate by a total of 75 basis points to 4.5 percent this year. Last week, the BSP slashed its overnight borrowing rate by 25 basis points to 5 percent, the lowest level since since the independent central bank was created in 1993.

"The BSP would also certainly attract speculative funds and that will hasten or accelerate the appreciation of the peso vs the dismay of dollar earners such as the exporters," Trinidad said.

Trinidad said he expected the BSP to lower its overnight borrowing rate to 4.5% percent this week and further to 4.25 percent by June.

"At 4.5 percent, it will provide part of the stimulation or arsenal to help the Philippine economy be less vulnerable to offshore strains," he said.

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UBS ups RP outlook, cites high '07 growth

By Michelle V. Rosca

UNION BANK of Switzerland expects the Philippine economy to grow 5.5 percent this year, half a percentage point higher than its previous estimate of 5 percent.

UBS announced last the other week that it was lowering its growth projection for the Philippines to 5 percent, but it was prompted to revise its outlook because the Philippines' gross domestic product, the sum of all goods and services produced within the country's borders, expanded last year by a higher-than-expected 7.3 percent.

The lower 10th forecast for 2008, however, is still slower than its original growth projection this year of 6.1 percent, as it took into account a likely slowdown in the global economy.

In its latest paper on the Philippine economy, UBS noted that the 7.3-percent GDP growth in 2007, the highest in 10 years, exceeded analysts' expectation of 7 percent and government's target of 6.1-6.7 percent.

The bank said last year's robust growth was driven partly by the increase in investments, especially in construction. Public construction grew 20.4 percent, while private construction rose 7.1 percent, beating most projections. UBS added that the increase in construction in 2007 would help spur economic activity in 2008.

"This data [construction growth] represents a much better base from which the Philippine economy can start, going through external growth environments in 2008," UBS said.

The bank, echoing predictions of other analysts, said it expects the industry giant market to dampen the growth of emerging economies.

But it said the country's strong finish in 2007 gave it power to outshine some of the ill-effects of a projected recession in the United States.

Recession is loosely defined as two quarters of negative economic growth.

A recession in the United States, the Philippines' biggest export market, is feared to slow growth of the domestic economy.

Besides being a major trading partner, the United States is also where most overseas Filipino workers and clients of call centers in the Philippines are based.

Because the growth in consumer spending partly depends on remittances sent by OFWs, a recession in the United States is feared to dampen consumption - a major growth driver of the Philippine economy.

The National Economic and Development Authority earlier estimated that every one-percent drop in the gross domestic product of the United States results in a 1.784-percentage-point decline in the growth of the Philippines' gross national product (GNP), which includes income from abroad.

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PFI-AC Peso Equity Fund	1.3898	1.3848
PFI-AC Balanced Fund	0.9332	0.9271

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IN THE MATTER OF THE CORPORATE REHABILITATION OF GRAND EAST EMPIRE CORPORATION

SPEC. PROC. NO. Q-08-592
For: Corporate Rehabilitation under the Interim Rules of Procedure on Corporate Rehabilitation

GRAND EAST EMPIRE CORPORATION,
Petitioner

STAY ORDER

This case is before the Court on the petition for corporate rehabilitation filed by the above-named corporation dated 10 January 2008. Finding the petition sufficient in form and substance, the Court issued an Order dated 21 January 2008 giving due course thereto and directing petitioner to cause the publication of the said Order in the Philippine Star, a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines, once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks, the first publication to be made not later than 10 days after the date of the said Order, and to furnish a copy of the petition and its annexes to the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Bureau of Customs, the Department of Finance, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Department of Justice, the Philippine Stock Exchange, the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Land Bank of the Philippines, the Development Bank of the Philippines, the Philippine Export and Foreign Loan Guarantee Corporation, the Bureau of Treasury, the Bureau of Local Government Finance, the Bureau of Local Government Supervision, the Commission on Audit, the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City, the Office of the Solicitor General, the Office of the City Prosecutor of Quezon City, the Office of the City Treasurer of Quezon City, the Office of the City Assessor of Quezon City, the Office of the Barangay Chairman of Barangay Bagong Pag-asa, Quezon City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Quezon City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Caloocan City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Valenzuela City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Malabon City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Navotas City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Pasig City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Marikina City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Pasay City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Makati City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Mandaluyong City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of San Juan City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Taguig City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Parañaque City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Las Piñas City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Muntinlupa City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Pasig City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Marikina City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Pasay City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Makati City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Mandaluyong City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of San Juan City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Taguig City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Parañaque City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Las Piñas City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Muntinlupa City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Pasig City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Marikina City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Pasay City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Makati City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Mandaluyong City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of San Juan City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Taguig City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Parañaque City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Las Piñas City, the Office of the Register of Deeds of Muntinlupa City.

(Sgd.) RAMON PAUL L. HERNANDO
Presiding Judge

Soroptimist Tribute for 100 Women Empowers Women Beneficiaries

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF MAKATI (SIM) Foundation, Inc. (SIMFI) marks Women's Month with a recognition appreciation gala dinner and fashion presentation of 100 women achievers from all over the country during the "Soroptimist Salute ... Only the Best Women" the event, sponsored by Production Chairs Mercy L. Zuñiga, begins with the launching of the Book of members of Soroptimist. Making a Difference for Women Award (MADWA) and culminates with a parade of Philippines gowns by the country's top designers inspired by noted Filipino Fine Talents. Presents raised will benefit SIMFI's Adopt a Livelihood Center in the Bicutan/Sucat Area which aims to empower the operation of livelihood projects so that new women productivity begins as the very site where displaced families are resettled. Its projected partner beneficiaries are women-headed households.

Soroptimist International Isabelita Ruiz B. Villalon who heads the new 40 club-strong volunteer service organization says, "Soroptimist officers are working women who are also volunteers. Officers' duties at embrace all over the country in join this significant event." Likewise, Reinvestment Program Chair Sarah E. Flores said, "The MADWA winners, traditionally honored during the International Women's Month, shall receive their awards from past Region Governors in the event's opening program."

ALUMNI HOMECOMING

CALLING ALL BATCH '58 GRADUATES OF ANGLICAN (PUBLIC) HIGH SCHOOL! Reminder Reminder, St. Andrew's Theological Seminary announces the 40th year of its Batch '58 Alumni Homecoming scheduled on February 16, 2008, Saturday, 1:00 PM, Makati Sports Club, Makati City. Call Lucy at (632) 891-1004 / (632) 928-8626 or visit Classic Living at (632) 551-2366.

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GENERAL MANAGER

for

ILAGAN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (ILECO II)
Palanan, Isabela

Qualifications:
- At least 35 years old
- Holder of Bachelor's Degree in Engineering, Business Administration, Engineering, Economics, Accounting, Finance, Management or Management Economics
- With Master's Degree or Post Graduate Degree preferred
- With at least 5 years managerial experience in an electric cooperative
- Physically fit and of good moral character
- Must be willing to relocate and reside in Palanan, Isabela

Monthly Salary: P50,000.00

Application forms and additional information may be obtained from the Administrative Development Department, 4th Floor NEA Building, 140 Reliz Street, Diliman, Quezon City. Deadline for submission of applications is on 15 February 2008.

(Sgd.) EDITHA S. ALMAZ
Administrator

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

GREG S. ALBA

Passed away in the grace of the Lord on January 23, 2008 at the age of 44.

Family & friends request the readers to join them in praying for his eternal happiness in Heaven.

His body lies in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapel, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on February 06, 2008 at the Heritage Park, for view please visit Loyola Memorial Chapel.

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People, Events & Products

UCPB TURNS OVER 6K HOUSES TO COCO FARMERS

The UCPB Gen Foundation turned over recently the first of six completed housing units at the Grand Kalinga (GK) Countryside Molave, Zamboanga del Norte to farmer beneficiaries (shown shaking the symbolic keys). The UCPB GK Foundation is spearheading a total of 20 housing units, and the 13 others will be completed soon. The GK Countryside project is part of the program of assistance of UCPB and the GK companies intended to uplift the living conditions of small coconut farmers.

Sitti ... So This Is Love at the Music Museum

THE IDOLBOY'S "Queen-of-Divas navs" effects somersault in her upcoming late-night show at the Music Museum in San Juan on Feb. 8 and 9. Dubbed "Sitti ... So This Is Love", the spectacle is seen as an intermediate future for the outrageous from the trend- setting singing sensation. And while everyone would expect something that's all drama now, the 23-year old stage stunner has something more to give: a pop show. Of course, she'd still have a portion showcasing her diabolical style and belting-voice performance. She will be singing songs from her latest album with Warner Music called "My Grass Skirt" which includes the song "My Ever Changing Moods." Directed by John Vincent Lucena, "Sitti ... So This Is Love" brings the best- selling and idol-singing-a-wide-range of covers repertoire from Disney's "A Whole New World" to Ryan Arizaga's "Bits Sa Puso Ko" to Neil Sedaka's "When I Fell In Love" to Sienna Cruz's "Kasing Ay Ako Ang Pangit." Supporting numbers in good company, Kenny Rogers' "Lucille" and Whitney Houston's "I Will Always Love You" to Apo Hiking Society's "Bird Song" complete the set. Sitti will be joined by a couple of male singers and comic acts. Comedienne Marissa Sanchez and trainer Smokey Mountain member Jeffrey Hidalgo will show up on February 8 while impersonator Jon Santos and balladeer Richard Poon are scheduled to appear the following night. Both shows start at 8 p.m. Sponsoring "Sitti ... So This Is Love" are PDSE, Landmark, Pagcor, Club 9 specials, KISS, Shell, Wokao and Sunkissed. Backed by Music Philippine Daily Inquirer, Dream-FM 105.7, Love Radio 90.7, and Yes FM 101.1. Tickets are available at Music Museum (721-6736), Tribal World (891-0888) and selected National Bookstore outlets.

Whirlpool showroom in Trinoma Mall

DAETEH INC., Philippine distributor of world-class Whirlpool, Glem-Gas, and Fujidenzo home and commercial appliances, recently announced the opening of its newest showroom at the Trinoma mall named "Kitchens by Daateh". Located at the ground floor of Trinoma, the Daateh showroom features some of the newest and latest kitchen products, such as refrigerators and freezers, cooking ranges, microwave ovens, and other cooking equipment. Also available are washing machines, dryers, and split-type airconditioners, among other appliances. According to Daateh Inc. marketing manager Joy Datta, "We're excited about the opening of Kitchen Excellence by Daateh, which is a great destination for your kitchen needs. With the opening of Trinoma, our products will be available and accessible to more customers in Quezon City." Products at the Daateh showrooms are available through cash or card purchases. According to Daateh, customers can look forward to promos, premium items and discounts for every purchase. For more information on the Daateh showrooms at Trinoma, customers can reach Daateh Inc. at (632) 712-8926.

HAPEE TOOTHPASTE SUPPORTS NATIONAL DENTAL HEALTH MONTH

Lumiqao Corporation, makers of Hapee Toothpaste joined the country's premiere dental group the Philippine Dental Association (PDA) during the 4th National Dental Health Month opening ceremonies at the Musk Hall, SM Mall of Asia. The event saw PDA's chapters and affiliates from all over the country converge to celebrate the National Dental Health Month with the theme "Kung Sigang Mangangaga si Nating Pilipino, Kalusog Buong Mundo." The annual event aims to raise public awareness on oral health care and the status of dental practice in the Philippines. Invited as guests were dental schools and associations. As memorable, Jai Up Ur Jeep contest and a dental school herbal dancing competition are some of the highlights. World class act Lea Salonga rendered the PDA's centennial theme song "Isang Mahing Awit," a song that was especially composed for the internationally-acclaimed singer. Lumiqao Corporation is also a proud partner of the PDA in its centennial anniversary. The PDA celebrated its founding in 1908 celebrating a hundred years of organized dentistry in the Philippines. Hapee recognizes the PDA's mission as vital in the attainment of a better, healthier Filipino society while the PDA through its use of approved acknowledges Hapee's world-class quality. Hapee continues to provide innovative dental and oral health care products for Filipinos. Photo shows (from left) Cecilia B. Pedro, president and CEO, Lumiqao Corporation, Hapee toothpaste and Hapee endorser, Lea Salonga and Dr. Elmer B. Flores, president, Philippine Dental Association during the opening ceremony of the Fourth National Dental Health Month.

Old techniques revisited in Makati photo exhibit

MODERN PHOTOGRAPHY WOULD AT- tempt to look back at its roots when a new exhibit entitled "Chemistry, an Old Science Exhibit: The Art and Craft of Alternative Photographic Print Processes, unveiled last Feb. 1 at the Bella Luna Studios, Cocomil Place, Alviar Corner, 116 Rada Street, Legaspi Village, Makati. The event will officially run from Feb. 2 to 15. It will showcase the works of Caroline Cebu Jr., Joana Cebu, Mae Pamonsusio, Cris Sinsuangco, and Allan Sano. The featured photographers explore the forgotten but beautiful art of cyanotype, kallitype printing, gum dichromate, toned-tinted prints, Cum-over Platinum prints, and Pinhole Photography that old museum preferred centuries ago.

Modern Photography has come a long way with the advent of modern technology that helped revolutionize the methods especially printing. The exhibit presents an opportunity to those who yearn for the true craftsmanship of the art in a more arduous and painstaking but artistic manner of photography.

The affair is under the aegis of the Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation, Inc. and has received support from Silverlane large format camera, Ilford black and white films and Photoworld Asia.

₱162B needed for coal exploration, development

DOE encourages potential investors to look into clean-coal technologies

By Abigail L. Ho

IN THE NEXT SIX YEARS, THE COUNtry will need around ₱162.2 billion in investments for exploration and development, with bulk of the infusion to go to areas in the Visayas.

According to data from the Department of Energy, ₱77.4 billion in new investments would be needed to explore and develop potential coal-mining areas in the Visayas.

Another ₱43.6 billion would go to Luzon, while ₱39.3 billion would be earmarked for Mindanao from now up to 2014.

To spur investments, the DOE is encouraging private investors to put up more coal-fueled power plants, or generation facilities that are situated within coal mines.

The mine-mouth power plants can cut low-rank coal, which is abundant in the country, according to the DOE.

The department is also encouraging investors to look into the exploration of production of higher-rank coal, which can be used either as blending coal for imported coal or as primary fuel for coal-fired power plants.

Potential investors can also look into the possibility of employing clean-coal technologies if they decide to put up coal-fired generation facilities.

"Now that clean-coal technologies are available, the demand for coal has remained steady despite the current stringent standards on environmental concerns," the DOE said.

Specifically, the DOE's call for new coal-related investments, Vulcan Mining and Energy Development Corp. has committed to infuse more cash to develop its coal-operating contract area in Mindanao.

Vulcan Mining chair Carlos Ibasco said the company would be pursuing exploration projects in Dapitan, North Cotabato and Argao, Cebu. Production would also continue in Bislig, Surigao del Sur.

According to Ibasco-ng, there is much promise for domestic coal in the market, unlike before when export premium and cement plants were reluctant to use local coal in their operations.

Power plant operators are now more open to the possibility of using Philippine coal due to the emergence of new technologies, he added.

"For several decades, conventional pulverized coal-fired power plants worldwide—like those in Germany, Australia, India and Thailand—have used very low rank coals, some with much lower heating value than Philippine coals," Ibasco-ng said.

Gaycor Builders said technologies, or clean-coal technologies, also use circulating power plants to burn coals with a wider range of ranks and quality, including the low-rank variety abundantly found in the country, he said.

Since the coal shortage in 2003, coal users have boosted their utilization of local coal with little or no retrofitting on their respective plants, he said.

Today, Philippine power plant operators are now coming up with new designs for their facilities, hoping to maximize the use of low-rank local coal, Ibasco-ng said.

Pall Mall case, seen to create loophole in Sin Tax law

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVenue has warned that a loophole in the Sin Tax Law would be created if the government were to impose a lower excise tax on the Pall Mall brand of cigarettes.

The BIR told the Department of Finance, its mother agency, that agreeing to a lower excise tax on Pall Mall would only encourage other cigarette makers to use the same "tricks" in securing a lower tax rate.

British-American Tobacco (BAT), maker of Pall Mall, wants government to classify the brand as a low- or tier-bracket of ₱6.35 per pack, instead of ₱28.48 per pack.

BAT argued that the higher tax rate was applicable only to imported Pall Mall. But importation of the brand has stopped since October 2005. The tax rate on Pall Mall should therefore be ₱6.35 per pack, BAT said, which is the rate imposed on locally produced brands that fall under the same price classification.

But according to the BIR, "simply defining off an [imported] product in the market should not modify the excise tax rate of the same product pursuant to the provisions of the tax code."

"To allow such a scheme would render the excise tax system nugatory," BIR Commissioner Lilian Hefti said in a recent letter to Finance Undersecretary Gerardo Esguerra Jr., head of the DOF legal staff that must sign off on the proposal.

In the case of Pall Mall, Hefti said, nothing will prevent computation of the brand later on, or after the government agrees on a lower tax rate—the coal ₱ Pall Mall were to be placed in the market for the first time, after the government would be pressured by law to raise the applicable tax rate even if misperception happen.

The DOF is reviewing the Pall Mall taxation case, although Mindanao had earlier hinted that the DOF found merit to the stand of BAT.

Anchor Land sets aside ₱4.5B for new condos

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lucas

CONDOMINIUM DEVELOPER Anchor Land Holdings Inc. is spending roughly ₱4.5 billion for new residential condominiums this year, company vice chair Steve Li said.

In the second quarter, Anchor Land is set to break ground for "Tuscany Park Suites," an 18-story twin tower residential, mid-rise condominium in Bonifacio City, which aims to offer more than 900 units.

The ground floor area of the condominium may be allocated for business process outsourcing firms.

Anchor Land is setting aside ₱1.5 billion for Tuscany, named after the family's residential home in the affluent Manhattan, New York suburb stands for "Triangle below Canal Street."

With Tuscany, Anchor Land is targeting the middle-income market and plans to offer fully furnished one-bedroom units of roughly 30 square meters for P2 million each.

Tuscany is expected to be completed in the third quarter of 2011.

Anchor Land is also spending around ₱2.5 to ₱3 billion for a 30-story residential condominium in Binondo, Manila, Li said.

The high-rise, to be built on a 3,100-sq. m. property on Ongpin Street, is considered to be the tallest building in the area.

Anchor Land came to possess the property after it acquired Condominium Corporation Corp., a landowner in Manila's Binondo district.

Guinness owns five parcels of land with a total area of 1,985.7 sq. m., all located on Ongpin Street in Manila's Chinatown district.

The new Binondo project, which has yet to be named, will offer four to five living for members of the Chinese-Filipino community in the area. The building will tower over the city, providing panoramic views of the Binondo district.

The Binondo project will be Anchor Land's fifth residential condominium project to date.

One of Anchor Land's successful projects to date is the 33-storey Lee Tower on Binondo, which was delivered ahead of schedule in 2006 and was fully sold out.

Anchor Land is majority owned and controlled by Stephen Lee and family. Also, business tycoon Henry Sy is a long-term investor in the firm.

Creba urges import levy to ease burden on OFWs

THE CHAMBER OF REAL ESTATE and Builder's Associations Inc. (Creba) said that overseas workers, whose annual remittances have considerably improved the country's economy should not contribute to suffer due to the peso's appreciation.

An import levy on non-essentials, of such percentage more or less equivalent to the OFWs losses, would be an ideal balancing solution that requires a more extensive review in happen.

Unessential (nonessential items) should not be allowed to rise at the expense of OFWs, who are more in need of government assistance than any other sector," Creba founder and chair Manuel M. Dominguez said in a statement.

Senators, citing reports, said that OFW annual losses now approximate 17 percent of what used to be the exchange rate of the peso against the $1 dollar.

All the while, local importers of nonessential items "are enjoying a bonanza of sorts in view of the peso appreciation," he said. "In senators, this is tantamount to discouraging dollar inflow while encouraging dollar outflow."

He said this could easily be corrected through an executive order that would require an import levy on nonessentials of 10 to 15 percent of import price.

The proceeds could then be placed in a fund, which government could tap to enforce policy, such as ensuring a fair rate of exchange for the wages of workers abroad.

"This proposition is not new," Dominguez said. "It is no different from the coco levy imposed during the Marcos regime," which was designed to assist the farmers.

The proposed executive order, he said, could be adjusted or lifted anytime.

He added that exporters, apart from OFWs, also stand to gain from this scheme.

Regulator consolidates bond trading around PDS Group

By Desiree L. Lucas

MARKET REGULATORS HAVE FOR the consolidated the trading of bonds and debt instruments under the Philippine Dealing System (PDS) Group, paving the way of the building for the sole organization eligible to facilitate so-called over-the-counter (OTC) transactions.

Last Friday, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) granted self-regulatory organization (SRO) status to the PDS Group's Philippine Trading and Exchange Corp. (PDEx).

OTC market refers to the method of buying or selling securities outside an exchange or a trading system. Previous to this, the local OTC market had operated under a loose set of conventions while regulators feared stocks in prone to abuse or secrecy.

The SEC move paves the way for the full implementation of the PDS Group's plans to revitalize the local corporate market by putting in place the infrastructure necessary for more active bond trading.

More importantly, PDS Group officials said, the SEC's decision would help facilitate more five-cent of liquidity in the country, allowing both private and public sector borrowers to pay lower interest rates for bond funds.

"No broker or dealer shall participate in any OTC market unless he is a member of an SRO," the SEC said, saying that it had given brokers and dealers one year—ending last Jan. 31, 2009—within which they could form their own SROs or join an existing SRO.

During the transition period, only the PDEx applied to set up SRO, the SEC's market regulation department, officer in charge Vicente Graciano P. Felizmenio Jr. said in an letter.

"Broker-dealers that continue to trade in the OTC market but are not members of a registered SRO for the OTC market shall be considered in violation of the OTC rules," he warned.

To avoid the formation of a market monopoly, however, the SEC said that other OTC market participants may still form and register their own SROs despite the PDS Group holding the sole franchise at present.

In an interview, PDS Group chair Vicente Cuedillo said last week's SEC approval is part of a three-pronged strategy that would eventually result in a "more vibrant" bond market in the country.

"Recently, we also cleared a deal with SGX (Singapore Exchange Limited) making them our partner with a 20-percent stake," he said, explaining that the deal added Lore and eyes from the capital base of the local bond exchange. "We have ₱220 million in funds, capital on top of what we already have."

Cuedillo said the PDS Group is also set to launch other platforms which will offer "liquidity-creating products" that are the hallmarks of more mature bond markets abroad.

These include securities borrowing and lending facilities and a channel to encourage more companies to raise funds directly from the local bond market.

To date, operations of the DBS Group have helped reduce the gap between interest rates on 10-day bonds and 10-year bonds to "less than 200 basic points" compared to a gap of more 350 basic points before it started operations, Cuedillo said.

At the same time, the value of securities entrusted to its depository unit has climbed steadily, hitting ₱5.44 trillion at the end of 2007, compared to ₱890 billion at the end of 2006.

South Lake Village at ETON CITY

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Now, taking inspiration from these new world wonders, Eton Properties Philippines, Inc. introduces one of the biggest and most ambitious developments in the country – ETON CITY.

The centerpiece of this world-class city is SOUTH LAKE VILLAGE – the country's first and only community of high-end exclusive islands surrounded by a massive 35-hectare man-made lake. A proud product of nature, technology and modern engineering, these island lots raise the bar in exclusivity, security, and privacy.

Situated in a sprawling, almost 1,000 hectare, property in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, ETON CITY is masterplanned to lavish you with a complete city lifestyle in a nature-rich, suburban setting. It boasts high-end residential enclaves, a world-class business district, a championship golf course, and first class leisure, entertainment, and shopping hubs effectively making it "the Makati of the South."

ETON CITY. High-end. Redefined.

BUSINESS Monday

'I know what you *bought* last year'

By Margie Q. Espino, Tina Arceo-Dumlao and Bernie W. Dantinge

(Last of two parts)

BUSINESSMONDAY CONtinues its popular "I know what you bought ..." series with this installment featuring top selling cars, hardware and store departments store items.

Best selling vehicles for 2007

- Toyota Innova—10,544
- Isuzu Crosswind—5,306
- Mitsubishi Adventure—5,087
- Toyota Vios—8,717
- Honda Civic—7,903
- Toyota Fortuner—7,316
- Toyota Avanza—6,207
- Honda CRV—6,388
- Honda City—5,936
- Toyota Altis—5,403

Handyman's top selling items

1. Black and Decker drill
2. Do it Best Paint
3. High Gear Tire Block
4. Bear-wear Dog Chow
5. Sewer Snake Max
6. Alpha elite water heater
7. Do it best extension cords
8. Philips energy saving bulb
9. Heritage ceiling fans
10. Outdoor Tree

True Value's best sellers

1. Aluminum Basket Gazebo
2. Memaxx Massage Table
3. Tide White Bleach
4. Smells Begone odor absorber
5. Weber BBQ Grills
6. Scotts Salt
7. Werner Ladders
8. Pebble Barb coat
9. Bicycle Sunnies (each color
10. Garden Tiki Torch

Microwarehouse

1. iPod
2. Linksys wireless products
3. Belkin peripherals
4. Apple computing products
5. iLuxes

ACE Hardware's 2007 best sellers

1. Cool air cooling fan
2. Asahi cooling fan
3. Cool air industrial 18" fan with oscillation
4. Grand Prix zinc tace cement (Bagby)
5. Butter Pickleize extended range an tenna
6. Ivanced burner gas refill
7. Omni universal adaptor
8. OmniLA meter extension cord
9. Everready battery Ad size (1 pc. 6type index
11. Coleman gasoline generator/13 HP

SM's top selling sportswear

1. Converse Chuck Taylor All Star Low-cut P1,695
2. Converse Chuck Taylor All Star Low-cut P1,695
3. Santiago beach slippers P475
4. Santiago beach sandals P495
5. Accel RH jersey P799.75
6. Nike Air TR P2,895.00
7. Adidas Gil Zero basketball shoes P2,195.00
8. Nike Get a sandal slippers P1,295

Pinoy gamers get double points with 'Cronous'

By Rica T. Dizhuranza

ABS-CBN INTERACTIVE's online games division, Amped Games, is preparing to unleash a rough massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG) for hardcore gamers: Cronous.

"Cronous can provide a tougher experience to MMORPG gamers who want a variety of quests," Amped Games division head Mitch Buhay said.

At the same, he added, the game can "accommodate template gamers with basic computer space and some knowledge of games like Unreal."

What's more, the developers are giving Pinoy double points for the same amount. For example, a purchase of P200 via its registration in foreign currency would normally provide 1,000 points. But Filipino players can get 2,000 points for the same price.

Like those of other MMORPGs, Cronous' characters and online community exist in a server that players from around the world can also access. The four playable characters—Fighter, Magician, Valkyrie and Savage—each have their strengths and weaknesses.

Buhay said Cronous plays out in rich 3D graphics with minimal computing power. Players just need at least a Celeron 1GHz processor, 256 MB RAM and a 16 MB 3D graphics card—specs that are available in just about every Internet café or home PC.

Set to launch commercially in February, Cronous is a free-to-play MMORPG created by Lionel Interactive, a game software development company based in South Korea.

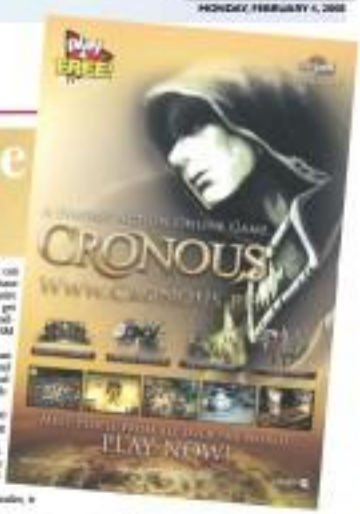
After the official launch, players can play for free but would need to purchase in-game items to power up or acquire weapons. For this, players need to get Amped prepaid cards which are available at Leaderboard outlets and all 7-Eleven branches.

The same Amped prepaid cards can be used for MMORPGs Cronous and Tantra, and casual games PlanBash and Gemmpol. All these games are published by the ABS-CBN unit.

A minimum player base of 200,000 is expected to try out the game during its initial launch phase.

Amped Games registered 2.5 million active players in 2007 and is ready to double that player base to 5 million this year.

More information, including the trailer, is available at cronous.amped.ph.



Life stories, memories in digital frames

RESEARCHES SHOW THAT MORE THAN two-thirds of digital photos taken are never printed or displayed, keeping memories locked up on memory cards and computer hard drives.

Hewlett-Packard Corp. sets photos free from the hard drives and brings them in to the online table-talk to digital picture frames like—the 7-inch widescreen DPF0738WBH, 8-inch widescreen DPF0838GD and the traditional 8-inch DPF0838.

Pictures can be uploaded to the frames via USB cable or directly from the camera. The frames can display and rotate nearly 100 12-megapixel photos.

The widescreen 7-inch DPF0738WBH brings photos to life with an 800x480 resolution, 220 cd/m brightness and a 400:1 contrast ratio. The 8-inch versions and the traditional model provide more screen space and audio and video capabilities. They display JPEG, BMP and M-JPEG files and for DPF0838GD, MPEG1 and MPEG4 files. The DPF0838 offers 800x600 resolution and 300:1 contrast ratio, while the DPF0738 offers 480x800 resolution and 500:1 contrast ratio.

Samsung Digital photo frames represents convergence in multimedia solutions. With it, one can enjoy vibrant digital images without turning on a PC or printing out photos and share memorable moments with family and friends for many.

Through its wireless networking function, digital images can be transferred from the Internet to the digital photo frame.

The Samsung Digital Photo Frames—SPF-72H/SPF-72V and SPF-83H/SPF-83H—also feature mp3 and video playback, 7-inch and 8-inch high definition TFT LCD, user friendly interface, simple navigation, selection of slideshow effects, internal flash memory, direct connection to mp3 player and PMP, and built-large stand and wall-mount.

Brother introduces new range of 3-in-1 color inkjet printers

BROTHER INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINES, a leader in home and business IT peripherals, unveiled its latest series of inkjet 3-in-one printers—the DCP-130C, DCP-330C and DCP-540CN—designed specifically for home and small office use.

"The new MFC series is an add-on of our extensive research and development coupled with an in-depth study on the printing needs of the consumers today. We are confident that our all-in-one will further increase our market share in the already saturated color inkjet all-in-one market in the Philippines," said Hideaki Ishiyama, Brother International Philippines general manager.

"We believe that each user will be able to find a MFC that fits his or her exact needs, may it be at home or at the office. With our 3 Up! ink design technology, usually found only in high-end inkjet machines, each color printer will be of your best friend," Ishiyama added.

Each model has a print resolution of up to 1,200 x 6,000 dpi.

Equipped with 3 Up! (printer) ink design technology found normally in high-end inkjet all-in-ones, this range will produce smoother and sharper images at more vivid color. With other solutions like color enhancement and

specific color using brand-like ink and handheld paper.

Each model comes bundled with the new BrotherPrint Studio software allowing users to apply setting such as change fonts, features, adjust the tones and remove blemishes to enhance their photos even further. In addition, this software will make printouts look professional and borderless printing easier.

The 130C printer ink cartridges for each color cartridge will only need replace the color cartridges that run out, cost-saving feature.

A space saver, each MFC is designed to offer up maximum space with its compact design. With full frontal operation, users will find it convenient to change consumables and load of paper for different tasks, letting you do more at once. With 4.3 LED interface at the front of the printers that allow users to print out scan documents and images directly from/to media devices.

Brother's new series of color inkjet 3-in-ones—the DCP-130C, DCP-330C and DCP-540CN—are priced at P5,950, P6,950 and P8,950, respectively. All models come with a one-year limited warranty on parts and labor.

Optional two-year or three-year extended warranties are also available. For more information and images of ViewSonic LCD TVs, or to locate an authorized ViewSonic dealer, visit www.ViewSonic.com/ph.

Sophistication comes in the form of high-def LCDs

VIEWSONIC® COR. ON TUESDAY launched a new line of high definition LCD televisions—the first from its newly formed VTV division—cementing the company's position as a leader in the desktop computer display market.

Its new N Series and W Series NextVision® LCD TVs offer sleek design with high-quality color and crisp imaging to meet the design and form of screen performance needs of viewers in any room.

"We've taken the best of ViewSonic's heritage in creating great visual experiences and combined it with contemporary design in the first televisions from our VTV division," said Jeffrey Whan, vice president and general manager of VTV business division, ViewSonic Americas. "This is just the beginning, and these new televisions are indicative of the style and performance we will continue to offer in our LCD TV line."

The widescreen N Series, which includes the 15.6-inch N1600w, 19-inch N1950w and 22-inch N2220w, is ideal for consumers seeking dual purpose HDTV/PC displays for smaller living spaces, such as the kitchen, office or den.

But for consumers looking for a stylish large screen with high-end luxury features, the W Series LCD TV is their answer, coming with a sleek, glossy finish to complement today's contemporary home.

The W Series includes the 26-inch N2650w, 32-inch N3250w, 42-inch N4250w, 47-inch N4790w and 52-inch N5390w, which are just the right size for home theaters and living rooms.

This fine features built in TV tuner and precision 3D comb filter with motion adaptive de-interlacing. HDMI 1.3 and digital noise reduction to deliver consistent, high-quality digital video pictures.

The 96 Series TVs of up to 47 inches feature a control base so the screen can be easily adjusted and viewed from more angles.

The new LCD TVs will be sold exclusively through authorized resellers, resellers, distributors and mail order outlets of ViewSonic.

ViewSonic NextVision® LCD TVs are backed by a one-year limited warranty on parts and labor.

Optional two-year or three-year extended warranties are also available. For more information and images of ViewSonic LCD TVs, or to locate an authorized ViewSonic dealer visit www.ViewSonic.com/ph.

HARI JOINS NEW BREED OF HEROES AT GK BAYANI SUMMIT

Rounder Arab Resources, Inc. (RARI), one of the industry's endorsement auto distributors, recently extended its full support to Gawad Kalinga at the latter's Bayani Summit held at the Meralco Theater, featuring the GK Hari, or the GK 1 young Filipino Bayanis. A gathering of modern-day heroes championing the cause of dedicated entrepreneurs, this event celebrated the selfless contributions of various organizations, corporations, educational institutions, non-government and government agencies, and international volunteer groups, among others, that have partnered with GK in bringing hope and a life of dignity and self-worth to the poor.

Among the highlights during the event were the presentation of the Bayani Awards and a dance performance from the children of Pusaka Heights, formerly Smokey Mountain, now converted to a GK Village. "We're turning conflict to peace, despair to hope," Mr. Tony Meloto, Chairman and founder of GK, said during the summit, as he introduced the awardees. GK's esteemed consultants, partners, communities, and supporters/donors that have rallied behind the noble work of Gawad Kalinga through the years.

RARI, through its sister-arm, the HARI Foundation together with the HARI Clusters Network, partnered with GK in 2008, following the devastating tragedy that struck Southern Leyte. With a donation of P50 million, HARI and its dealer network sponsored the construction of a GK Model School in Leyte, as well as other Metro schools in other GK communities in Nueva Vizcaya, Camarines Sur and Bacolod City in Negros. Apart from the construction of educational facilities, HARI also donated a Hyundai Starex FWD van in support of GK's Gawad Pangkabuhayan initiatives, to enhance the mobility of GK's leaders in their day to day activities as well as to provide reliable transportation to both local and foreign GK volunteers and partners as they showcase the different GK sites.

"On behalf of the entire HARI community, I would like to congratulate Gawad Kalinga for successfully organizing this Bayani Summit, and more importantly, for its passionate commitment to uphold the values of social responsibility in the quest for nation-building," expressed Mr. Ric Perez-Agudo, HARI EVP and Chief Operating Officer, in recognition of GK's success in pioneering shelter and anti-poverty programs for the nation's underprivileged.

"We are very grateful and at the same time, humbled, that Gawad Kalinga also recognizes HARI as a kindred lover of community citizenship and heroic servitude. We wish them more years of uplifting lives and bringing hope and inspiration to our nation," Ms. Perez-Agudo further added.

For more inquiries about HARI Foundation, Inc., dial 896-6616, or visit the Hyundai National Headquarters at 819 Gen. Ed Placid Ave., Makati City.

'I know what you bought last year'

Toy Kingdom Express

1. Sony PSP
2. Nintendo DS Lite
3. Camelot Advance
4. Nintendo wii
5. Playstation 3

SM's Baby Company

1. Kids rides
2. Looney Tunes rollyduppen
3. Looney Tunes stroller
4. Pigeon carrier necklace
5. Pigeon feeding bottles

TOPSHOP

Everything from the Kate Moss Collection

TOPMAN

1. Hoodies
2. Printed shirts
3. Net sweaters(s)
4. Skinny jeans

Toby's

1. Motorized treadmill
2. Exercise bikes
3. Boxing gloves
4. Badminton shuttlecocks
5. Basketballs

HBC

1. Havaianas professional rubber coat (hair remover)
2. Body recipe calamansi soap
3. Sun can pressed powder
4. Metabiliza M3 (Metabolism) drink
5. Ulan cologne (powder)

Start your own business: Learn to make soap, balloons

THE GOLDEN TRESORE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT Program sets two skills seminar on Feb. 9.

It will conduct a one-day seminar on soap making at the Tres Reyes Technical Center in Sto. Cristo in Tarlac, Tarlac City, on Feb. 9, Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Topics to be discussed are material sourcing and costing.

Participants will be taught how to make liquid dishwashing soap, liquid hand soap, liquid all-purpose soap, bar detergent, herbal bath soap (papaya, calamansi, cucumber, oatmeal, etc.), glycerin transparent bath soap) powder soap.

Bonus courses include making liquid bleach, tile and bowl cleaner, fabric softener, car shampoo, tire black, glass cleaner, air freshener.

All materials will be provided. For questions, call 02- 436-7820; 02-913-6551; 02-911-5413 and/or 421-1577.

On the same day, Feb. 9, Golden Treasures will conduct a one-day seminar on balloon making at the Sherwani Sharma Uy Limited at 8 access road Project 3, Quezon City, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Topics to be discussed are sourcing of materials, costing, proper inflating, proper tying, printing, etc. Participants will be taught how to make balloons for all occasions such as pillar, full arc, centerpiece, balloons for kiddie party balloon bouquet, and more inside the house.

For questions call 436-7820, 913-6551, 421-1577 and 435-6413.

MOVEMENTS

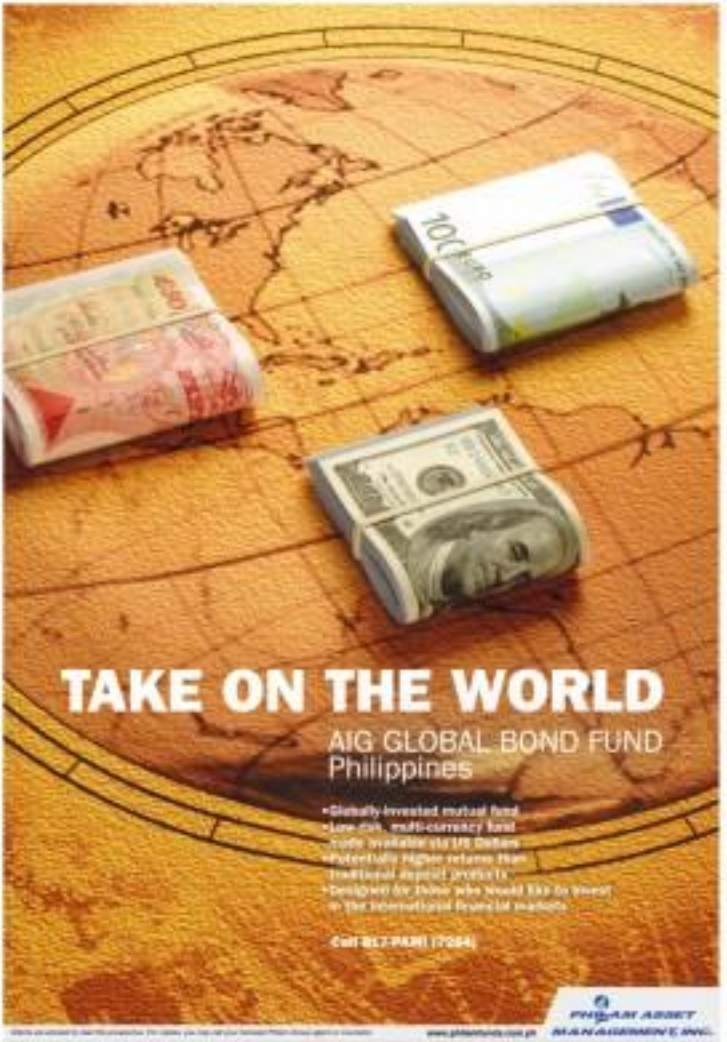
LJC food group expands

LARRY J. CRUZ, FOUNDER AND HEAD OF the restaurant group known as The LJC Group, recently announced top management changes as it enters its 25th year in the restaurant industry. Cruz, whose initials LJC now become synonymous with good taste in the food and restaurant industry in the Philippines, renamed their original company LJC Restaurant Management Inc. (LJCRMI) to LJC Management Consultancy Inc. (LJCMCI), to encompass seafood related businesses it has been setting up and expanding in recent years.

Cruz, who retains his chairmanship and CEO position announced the appointment of Lorna Cruz-Santos as president and chief operating officer of LJCMCI. Cruz-Santos joined her father's company in 1983 and has since held various positions in all aspects of the business which started as Café Ilustrado in Makati in 1979. She has held the position of executive vice-president and general manager until her promotion.

Cruz also named several associates to new positions as the management company restructuring. Eugenia B. Gilcruz, named VP for corporate affairs and general manager for administration; Marie dela Pena, VP and treasurer; Nestor Hernandez, VP for finance, and Neil Langit, VP for human resources and training.

LJC group named unit managers include the 28-year-old Café Ilustrado, the Mail Restaurant, Café Ilustrado, Bistro Formentos, Larry's Café & Bar and the In The Mood Premiere Dance Club.



BUSINESS Monday

'I know what you *ate* last year'

By Margie Quiroga-Espino and Tina Arceo-Dumlao

BUSINESS MONDAY EXpands its "I know what you bought last year" series to include this list of the top selling food items of fast-food chains last year.

The list is not really surprising as top-ranked products have been the restaurants' best-selling items for years.

Fast-food

Jollibee
1. Chickenjoy
2. Yumburger
3. French fries

McDonald's
1. Chicken McDo
2. Burger McDo
3. Fried Chicken
4. Chicken nuggets
5. Big Mac

Shakey's Pizza
1. Captain's Choice pizza
2. Oktober feast platter
3. Carbonara
4. Shakapa's Choice pizza
5. Bunch of Lunch (weekdays only)
6. Mojos

THE HEIGHT OF DISTINCTION

CONGRATULATIONS to our 2007 Dealer of the Year Awardees.

2007 Dealer of the Year
ISUZU ALABANG

2nd Place:
ISUZU CAGAYAN DE ORO

3rd Place:
ISUZU MAKATI

Other 2007 Awardees:

2007 MOST IMPROVED DEALERSHIP: ISUZU Alabang, ISUZU Cebu, ISUZU Cagayan de Oro

2007 HIGHEST SALES GROWTH: ISUZU Alabang, ISUZU Pasig, ISUZU Cebu

2007 BEST IN CROSSOVER SALES: ISUZU Cebu

2007 BEST IN PICK-UP SALES: ISUZU Alabang

2007 BEST IN ALTERRA SALES: ISUZU Alabang

2007 BEST IN TRUCK SALES: ISUZU Alabang

2007 BEST SELLER MIN: ISUZU Alabang

2007 BEST SELLER LUZON: ISUZU Alabang

2007 BEST SELLER VISMIN: ISUZU Alabang

2007 SALES EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR: ISUZU Alabang

2007 BEST CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RATING: ISUZU Alabang, ISUZU Batangas, ISUZU Cagayan de Oro

2007 BEST IN SERVICE OPERATION: 1st Place: ISUZU Cagayan de Oro; 2nd Place: ISUZU Alabang; 3rd Place: ISUZU Makati

2007 BEST IN PARTS OPERATION: 1st Place: ISUZU Makati; 2nd Place: ISUZU Alabang; 3rd Place: ISUZU Cagayan de Oro

2007 HIGHEST RETAIL SALES: NCR: ISUZU Makati; LUZON: ISUZU Cavite; VISMIN: ISUZU Mandaue

2007 BEST IN PAYMENT PERFORMANCE: ISUZU Cagayan de Oro

2007 BEST IN FULL SET PERFORMANCE: ISUZU Cagayan de Oro

2007 BEST IN "FUSA-MORU" PERFORMANCE: ISUZU Makati

2007 BEST IN WHOLESALE PERFORMANCE: METRO MANILA: ISUZU Alabang; LUZON: ISUZU Cavite; VISMIN: ISUZU Mandaue

2007 HIGHEST COMPLIANCE IN DATABASE OPERATIONS: ISUZU Alabang, ISUZU Sucat Area; LUZON: ISUZU Batangas; VISMIN: ISUZU Cagayan de Oro

2007 HIGHEST OVERALL SCORE IN DATABASE OPERATIONS & CSI: ISUZU Cagayan de Oro

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Chowking
1. Chicken lauriat
2. Halo-halo
3. Siopao asado
4. Pan'l-siomai
5. Beef tausiew (spicy and classic)

Pizza Hut
1. Pan Pizza
2. Classic of Mushroom Soup
3. Cheesy Pops
4. Stuffed Cheesy Pizza
5. Fettuccine Alfredo

Goldilocks
1. Mamon
2. Ensaymada
3. Chiffon cake slices
4. Pili tarts
5. Caramel popcorn

SM Supermarket best sellers
1. SM Bonus fresh chilled chicken
2. Gabaldon Eye-Q 1.8 kg.
3. SM Bonus refined white sugar 1 kg.
4. Milo 300 g.
5. Progresa Gold 1.6 kg.
6. Gardenia white bread

BUSINESS Monday

E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.net/business
Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Bajaro

Giant Japanese firm bullish on Philippine Economy partners with a leading local developer

Explore a world of possibilities. Witness the fusion of Filipino artistry and Japanese ingenuity. Discover a partnership of equals. Experience a higher standard of living with Federal Land-Orix Corporation's first project. Soon to rise in Legaspi Village, Makati is a destined to change the country's real estate landscape.

FEDERALAND-ORIX CORPORATION

For inquiries Call: 830-0000

www.federalland.com.ph

Why did I choose to stay in the Philippines?

THE AUTHOR provides insight on why he decided to stay in the country

By Howard Dalton
Former president of Unilever Philippines

BECAUSE OF FILIPINOS, that's the answer.

Filipinos who made us so welcome from day one and have enriched our lives ever since.

It has been almost 10 years since Cristina and I arrived in Manila. At Unilever, I found a spirit of family very akin to that in other places, and this wonderful family took us to their hearts and made my business career a joy.

What made it a joy was not just the hard work and spirit of our employees, but their willingness to embrace change and come up with innovations.

The Nescafe commercials, invented here, is now exported to 30 countries.

Close up "Lovapalooza" not only got into the Guinness book of records but was first-rated on CNN, BBC and many other news channels—I never thought I would be famous in Unilever for kissing!

I could give many other examples of the creativity of our Filipino employees. These innovations have made Unilever Philippines famous and admired in the Unilever world.

Outside Unilever, as many other people welcomed us as friends. They took the trouble to take us to meet their friends. In relative months we were busy almost every evening.

These friends took us beyond business into many different social circles, into the arts, government, NGOs and many others—we are blessed by this variety of experiences. And our circle of friends has grown and grown so that even now I am retired I am still busy.

It isn't only the well-off who have welcomed us.

Unilever is based in Pasig, on the edge of the Pasig and in the middle of a poorer community. It had a long tradition of community involvement, which Cristina and I were proud to support. As a result of our work on the environment and poverty alleviation, we have met many wonderful people who give their lives to helping the community.

We have also met thousands of Filipinos in poor communities, in

NEXT

What matters most?

My bank offers all kinds of solutions, whether at home or at work.
My bank answers all my needs, whether here or abroad.
My bank provides all kinds of services that are personalized, hassle-free and complete.

My bank is Maybank.

Maybank

People, Events & Products

Edna Arlos Espinosa

BBDO Guerrero Ortega gets gold at NY ad marketing awards

THE CHRISTMAS magnet is part of the highly effective campaign developed by BBDO Guerrero Ortega for Childhope Asia, a non-profit NGO working towards freeing street children from their suffering.

NOKIA SIEMENS NETWORKS TEES OFF FOR CHARITY

YAZAKI-TORRES TAPS INSULAR LIFE FOR GROUP INSURANCE

BBDO GUERRERO ORTEGA WAS recognized at the Advertising Marketing Effectiveness (ABE) Awards in New York with a Gold Effectiveness Medallion for its work for Childhope Asia Philippines, a non-profit, non-governmental organization that champions the plight of street children in Metro Manila.

The Gold Medallion was only one of 18 gold awards given to the 2007 competition. It was awarded in recognition of the success of the agency's campaign for Childhope in securing both corporate and individual donations for the organization's education program for street children.

The agency approached the campaign in two counter phases. First finding the general public aware of the magnitude of the issues facing street children, while the second was informing the public what they could do to help. Through the agency's campaign, Childhope secured donations of almost $100,000 to help itself run its street education programs everyday, help get children into shelters and in some cases, reunite them with their families.

The ABE Awards provides a forum for marketers to see the most effective campaigns and promotions in the world on an annual basis and are the only such awards to recognize the effectiveness as well as the creativity of advertising and marketing at a global level.

BBDO Guerrero Ortega's chief executive Ched Roehrig noted, "It is not only an honor to have the work we do for our clients held up as an example of communications effectiveness on the global stage, but for it also to be for Childhope is double gratifying, as it means that outstanding work can help the street children of these islands."

Manila Water's P187-B investment program boosts nat'l development

The P187 billion Service Improvement Plan of Manila Water Company (MWC) is expected to boost additional development, even as it concentrates on its concession within the East Zone of Metro Manila and parts of Rizal province to ensure 100-percent water and increased service levels by 2012, the company's plan has a time horizon up to the year 2022.

This was gleaned from the Service Improvement Plan of the premier water and wastewater company submitted, earlier, was also approved by the MWSS Regulatory Office, setting new service obligations, but double, water and wastewater projects that came the gamut from privatizing water sources like the Angat Dam to strengthening sewerage that make the supply network watch quake-resilient to putting up more wastewater treatment facilities.

As the water and wastewater firm pursues its reliability and expansion initiatives, it foresees more employment for many more people, as it foresees increased activity of allied industries and services. The increased construction of pipelines and other structures is expected to bring about a flurry of activities that generate new sub-contractors and other providers of services, according to Antonino Aquino, Manila Water president.

"We foresee that the water-to-the-horizon pipe laying and construction efforts have also stimulated the growth potentials of local governments units which are partnering with Manila Water to ensure not only reliable water supply in their respective localities but also an environmentally clean and healthy communities particularly on providing sewerage and sanitation services."

The Plan envisions two major efforts: Reliability and Expansion. Reliability efforts are made up of service sustainability programs with a budget of P68 billion, earthquake contingency at P4 billion, and dengue bite reliability at P6 billion.

Expansion programs include development of new sources of water which will cost about P86 billion, network expansion budgeted at P23 billion, and wastewater and sanitation program, P43 billion.

Manila Water has maintained its pro-poor programs, since its reliable water supply brings enormous benefits that translates to any town and city within the East Zone, Aquino pointed out.

Pro-poor posture

Aquino added that its pro-poor programs have been strengthened when it has very significantly reduced system losses from leakage and pilferage. With such losses reduced from a high of 63 percent in 1997 to a manageable 28 percent by end of 2007, such "water saved is now made available to the rest of our people," Aquino explained.

Well into 2022, Manila Water is committed to a 7-point agenda, as follower support the programs of the national government and LGUs, strengthen contingency planning, support the MWSS wastewater master plan, support MWSS's new water source development road map, improve reliability and efficiency, resolve outstanding regulatory issues, and ensure that the investments made in the program which is translated to energizing tariff impact.

"In other words, cost-efficiency levels will assure stable water rates through time," said Aquino.

Manila Water is now providing water supply to more than 5.3 million residents in the East Zone. More than 1.2 million people have been connected to the Manila Water network since 1997, 1.3 million of which come from the less revenue communities. It has achieved 100-percent water supply coverage in Pasig, Taguig, San Juan, Makati, Mandaluyong, Marikina and Manila.

Twenty-four hour water service is now enjoyed by 98 percent of the East Zone population connected to the Central Distribution System.

The consortium of Ayala Corp., Bechtel Enterprises Holdings Inc. and Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC) is the majority owner of Manila Water.

UK-based int'l pre-school sets reading course

UK-BASED INTERNATIONAL PRE-school Tumble Tots is offering a course for children to nurture parents that develops a child's love for reading and lays the foundation for academic success.

Designed for children from 3 to 5 years old, the course dubbed "Reading Ahoy!" will run from Feb. 4 to March 31 covering 10 sessions at twice a week.

The course will be administered at the Tumble Tots branch at E. Rodriguez Jr Avenue in Libis, Quezon City (467-6795, 467-6375 and 0917-7016007) in cooperation with the Schoolhouse Reading Center.

Comprising the course are letter names and sounds, phonological awareness, blending and decoding skills, and reading activities, according to Tumble Tots managing director Dyan Rian Cotton.

With over 100 centers in Europe and Asia, Tumble Tots has been voted as one of Britain's best kids brands by the Superbrands organization, acknowledging its leading expertise in early childhood education.

Tumble Tots offers "Active Play" and pre-school programs catering to mixed Mandarin language classes for children 6 months to 6 years old. Other programs such as kinder-mush, ABC Music & Me, and more, are also offered. The center has a unique active play and activity area, which is conducive to learning in Tumble Tots schools worldwide.

Tumble Tots also has a branch at A. Mabini Street, Davao City (82-2251847, 0917-7190811).

Extend your vacation for free in Club Manila East promo

BRING YOUR SPOUSE OR THE WHOLE FAMILY and go to Club Manila East and avail yourselves of the "$88.2 = 1 Trial" 3rd room offer for your money, because every less-night stay at any of the 75 deluxe villas in the leisure and recreational club puts you a 3rd night absolutely free of charge. Each room is equipped with hot and cold shower cable TV, refrigerator, toilet and bath, bathtub/mini pool, and 24-hour room service and security. For as low as P3,888 per night, you will also enjoy all the various swimming pools and water facilities the resort offers, including the ever enjoyable Fun Lagoon. The resort is in the 15th Road Philippine Navy Village, Fort Bonifacio, and the all-new Navy Diner Manny and bank over. They offer is until Feb. 15 only. Call 840-2851, 289-4160 for reservations and inquiries. Check out www.clubmanilaeast.com for more details.

'MBAs out-to-reach' offer free, quality education

FEW PEOPLE FIND HAPPINESS AND FULfillment not in the position that they hold or the amount of money they have in the bank but in giving their whole heart to serve other people without asking anything in return. Wow and quality education Center are one of the objectives of the group of MBA graduates from Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (PLM). This is their response in the increasing number of youth who are unfortunate to not have formal schooling in the tertiary level.

They call themselves Mentor Fulfillment Seekers Inc. (MFSI). They conduct free seminars on different business subjects to students of different technical courses like automotive, general electronics/electric, and so on. The group was established three years ago under the leadership of its founder Carlitos Dino Jr. MBA., together with the following pioneer members/volunteers: Conference Director Chico MBA; Al V. Suaco CPA, MBA; Wilda Suaco MBA; Marjorie Dino MBA; Catalina Abella MBA; Ben Galacio MBA; Lizie Rodriguez CPA, MBA; Sienna Aurelio, MBA, and various volunteers (on and later).

They are teaching five major business subjects like human behavior in organization, marketing, entrepreneur, production operations management and basic finance. In the 2nd year of service, the president of the Entrepreneur Society of the Philippines George Minanores and also the former president Jimmy Sabusco noticed the hard work and perseverance, and they provided the students of Mentor (MFSI-MSC) different management books and other teaching materials as part of their improvement.

(MFSI-MSTC Makati is the only technical school in the Philippines that has basic management and entrepreneurship development courses. It prepares graduates to become employers not only in the technical aspect but in the management as well. The group would not be successful without the support of Jose Bonus brothers Elmer and Ian Peñas.

Complete, low-cost water refill station

THE ELECTROMEX U6P500 mini compact water refilling station is a fully-assembled, high-capacity commercial-type water purification equipment that is also transportable and completely with stainless tanks, filter, stainless pumps, and multi-stage filtration, ozonator, and ultraviolet germicidal lamp system guaranteed to pass Department of Health and World Health Organization standards.

Similar in quality to popular mineral water brands Wilkins, Nature's Spring and Viva, the U6P500 also produces 3,000 gallons a day of mineral water and a noiseless, alkaline-ionic water for a production cost of just 30 centavos per gallon. It's compact, tall at 45 x 35 x 68 inches just a square foot of space.

At P150,000, this water refilling station does not require any coin-prohibitive franchise fees, and you get a quick return in your investment. It's the perfect business for retirees, overseas Filipino workers' families and smart-up couples and students who wish to make some profit without the hassles of big investments and high maintenance requirements.

The Electromex U6P500 uses the heavy duty water resource that fills factories, fridges, algae, viruses, metals, odors and germs and to better than the traditional expensive reverse osmosis that throws away 7 out of 10 gallons of water. The U6P500 does not need salt, and so filters are easily available at most department stores at just P500. The U6P 500 is also perfect for schools, factories, hotels, barangay centers, hospitals, hotels and military camps.

Electromex also build water treatments for chlorine and chemical-free swimming pools, making them safe and non-poisonous. The customers will remove algae and fungus forever and will cut down on your maintenance costs. The treatments are also suitable for overhead water tanks, ice plants and factory cooling towers with algae problems.

Log on to www.electromexinc.com or call 473-4164, 531-4782 or 531-9869.

MAP SAPUZ

Pinoy wins spot in Who's Who list

MAN JESUIT USA—A FILIPINO gained a spot in the so-called among the world's highest achievers in the 2008 edition of Marquis Who's Who in the World.

Roy E. Espina, 56, a Filipino registered nurse and entrepreneur was nominated by a group of nurses in the United States in the yearlong search for world achievers and includes Bill Gates in its list. Since 1899, when A.N. Marquis printed the First Edition of Who's Who in America®, Marquis Who's Who has chronicled the lives of the most accomplished individuals and innovators from every significant field of endeavor—including politics, business, medicine, law, education, art, religion and entertainment.

Espina, a summa cum laude graduate of the University of the Texas, and a board topnotcher, is a multi-awarded entrepreneur having won the Agora award from the Philippine Marketing Association (2000), Ten Outstanding Filipino (Inspirational Entrepreneur 10, 2004), Manasseh and Fielder's Young Market Maven Award for Entrepreneurship (2000), and Texas and Young Entrepreneur of the Year Philippine Finalist (2000). He is the youngest Philippine delegate to the 2005 Ernst and Young World Entrepreneurs Summit in Singapore and the first Asian Young Entrepreneurs Symposium Malaysia in 2007.

He now joins an elite list of 1.4 million achievers in the world since 1899.

Country above self: Responsible governance

MAPping the Future

Edgar O. Chua

I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT having a leader is a great honor and a great privilege. It is a great honor to be chosen by one's peers as it signifies your trust and confidence and for this I express my profound gratitude as the general membership and the 2008 Board. It is also a great privilege to have the opportunity to serve you, who are all leaders in your respective fields.

Our association's theme for 2008 is "Country Above Self: Responsible Governance." Some of you may ask, why Responsible Governance? It is the not part of Good governance which is one of the three key thrusts of MAP for 2008, the other two being programs to increase Membership benefits and embed Corporate Social Responsibility? The answer to this is that your Board wants to emphasize a particular aspect of Governance, which is critical to any leadership role, whether you are the leader of your family, your company or of the nation.

Being responsible leaders means focusing more on our duties rather than our entitlements and the perks that come with our position.

Being responsible leaders mean honoring our commitments, having the ability to finish what we have started and building much more than it.

Being responsible leaders mean going the extra mile and getting out of our comfort zones to aim for what others have deemed impossible or inspired us beyond their capability in itself, we call it "Saving Six to Six." Saving us to complacency, apathy, mediocrity and impossibility while urging you to ingenuity, creativity, passion and possibility.

Being responsible leaders means being accountable for one's actions and whatever consequences may arise therefrom.

But perhaps the real test of a truly responsible leader is the kind of legacy one leaves behind. At the end of the day, we will know we have left well if our initiatives have contributed to the growth of our respective companies, the prosperity of constituencies, the well being of every Filipino and the progress of our nation. We must remember that as leaders in our respective fields and as movers in society, we have a great sphere of influence not only in those where we make our base in the country as well.

The 2008, MAP shall continue to serve as the voice and conscience of business in Good Governance, implement more programs on Corporate Social Responsibility and increase Membership benefits to further enrich the leadership capabilities of our present members as we endeavor to attract new ones. Our top priority will be to build on the existing, nurture the projects of our association, while opening avenues to create new initiatives.

In line with our effort to reach out to the countryside, I am pleased to announce that this year we will be creating a MAP Committee in Mindanao, which we hope will evolve in to a MAP Chapter later on. Last year, we were able to establish a Committee for the Visayas as a first step in promoting wider networking opportunities for MAP members. Together with this, we shall continue our partnership with the media to further reach out to the public, create awareness and call for support for our various programs. We will likewise continue to build on the success of the Seminar program to further give in-depth issues-enterprise development. Given enough support, SMEs can be the real economic engine of this country, galvanizing the Philippine economy through its job-generating capability, adding to multiply expansions in the countryside, and capacity to act as seed beds for entrepreneurs and innovators.

As in the past, we shall rely on the various committees to drive MAP's activities and projects. Ad hoc committees will be formed from time to time to help in implement new programs. And following my policy of having a third one year term for president and two years for governors, your board has decided to limit the tenure of committee chairs and vice chairs in a maximum of three years so that everyone will have an opportunity to lead a committee and inject fresh perspectives.

I enjoin each and every MAP member to be actively involved in our association's activities. MAP is your association. It is only with your full support that we, as the 2008 Board, can work for the attainment of our association's mission of promoting management excellence and shaping a brighter future for our country. I am optimistic that through our combined efforts, we shall attain more than we can imagine.

The abbreviated version of inaugural address delivered by the author as 2008 president of the Management Association of the Philippines during the induction of 2008 MAP Board of Governors. Chua is chair and president of Filipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. Feedback at <mapsg@pldtdsl.net.ph>

Greenfield unveils Laguna township

GREENFIELD chair Jeffrey Campos, SM's Tessie Sy and Duane Santos

JOIN SY TOMAS GREENFIELD DEVELOPment Corp. (GDC) has quietly built a name for itself in the real estate business. It recently unveiled the master plan for the 200-hectare Greenfield City, a mixed-use development in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

GDC has earmarked about P1 billion for the construction of office buildings, new commercial centers, and the expansion of an upscale residential subdivision within the community.

Soon to rise in the Santa Rosa Business Park are two buildings with 6,000 square meters of office space for the business processing outsourcing company Ther-Tel Philippines Inc. Sta. Rosa commercial center will be expanded and SM Supermarket is considering putting up a branch in a 10-hectare-sized Laguna Central.

Greenfield also unveiled the country's first residential park. The Panorama, an Asian-inspired enclave that offers modern amenities, Greek villas, Classic mansions, Mediterranean villas, Chinese villas and Japanese-inspired homes.

As well as winning a Palme Lion in 2007, Armin has collected countless other international awards during the way, such as Cannes Lions, Epica, LIAA, One Show, NY Festivals, ADC Germany. Armin is also a member of D&AD, ADC NY and ADC Germany.

Since 2004, Armin has been heading Copywriting and integrated Ideas workshops at the Art Directors Club of Germany and is licensed trainer in Hamburg.

"Armin is one of the new breed of emerging talents who will lead this evolving and developing Cannes category," said Philip Thomas, Festival CEO. "We look forward to him leading the jury to uncover the world's greatest promotional work."

"I am incredibly proud to chair this jury" said Armin Jochum on his appointment. "A Cannes Lion is the hardest currency for any creative person. Just as to receive it would the Festival has developed in parallel with our industry, new disciplines such as promotion have also become more important."

Introduced in 2006, Promo Lions award the finished ideas that create and immediate activation taking into account positivity, strategy, execution and results.

Why did I ...

From page B2.1

Bueno, Smokey Mountain, Pasig, Marikina and elsewhere. Despite their struggle for a decent living, they have always made sure foreigners feel welcome.

We will never forget our first visit to Bicol, shortly after the terrible fire there, taking Tinderet's relief goods for 3,000 people. How calmly and cheerfully people waited for the distribution, and how the people in turn cut how peacefully they enjoyed our promise to return with more. It would not happen like that in many or called "advanced" countries.

It was a great honor to go to Malacañang recently and receive the Order of the Golden Heart from the President, in recognition of my community work. Of course I felt very proud, but also a little guilty as there are so many people who have worked longer and harder for the community than I have. I dedicate the award to them.

Certainly, the award does add to my motivation to continue.

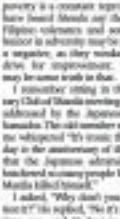
I was also honored to become President of Philippine Business for the Environment, and Cristina and I are involved in many other fulfilling activities.

We are lucky enough to have explored the Philippines, from Pagudpud in the north to Davao in the south, and enjoyed many beautiful places. I am a history major and have loved to visit so many old churches, though some are in sad disrepair.

Of course in lively but sunny Manila we have to dream of this beauty—or ride out in Lake Taal when it is wild and windy.

But we do enjoy the life of a bunyoy. We divide our time between sunny Manila and our beautiful farm in the heart of the English countryside, where the only sound is of the birds and a trickling stream.

Wilfredo Cristina



ACCEPTING the Golden Heart Award from PCNA.

What a contrast—for, you know, it makes a wonderful story.

Of course, it is sad to see our poor Filipinos abusing their fellow citizens, and the level of poverty is a constant reproach. I have heard friends say that the Filipino culture is to blame, and indeed in adversity may be rarely a negative, as they wonders the drive for improvement. There may be some truth in that.

I remember sitting in the Notary Club of Manila meeting being addressed by the Japanese ambassador. The old member next to me whispered "It's ironic that today is the anniversary of the day that the Japanese admiral who knocked us many people here in Manila killed himself."

I asked, "Why don't you mention it?" He replied, "No it's a long time ago, and it's best to move on." Was he right? I'm not sure.

George, my father in law, spent eight years here, and saw Filipinos at their best. Our two housekeepers, nanny and cook loved him like a grandfather, and when he came to need nursing he received a level of tender care which just could not be achieved in England. In his last years were happy years.

We are full of gratitude for the way our Filipino friends rallied round on his recent death. We decided to give him a Filipino wake—very different from the custom in England—and it was comforting to have the support of so many people.

During the wake, one of my friends said, "Here, with this extraordinary, you are truly Filipino." Still, I do want to feel that way.

So, for Cristina and I, it has become natural to stay here. We enjoy to enjoy the Philippines and in all its variety to share our lives with our Filipino friends, and, we hope, to give something back to the country which has adopted us.

ARMIN JOCHUM appointed 2008 Cannes Lions Promo Jury President

'Armin is one of the new breed of emerging talents who will lead this evolving and developing Cannes category'

Cannes Lions 2008 Open For Entries

London, 31 January 2008 – Entrant companies can now submit work to compete at the 55th Cannes International Advertising Festival in all categories - Film, Press, Outdoor, Direct, Media, Cyber, Radio, Promo, Titanium, Integrated and the new Design Lions categories.

Entry forms can be completed online at www.canneslions.com from today (Tuesday 1st of January 2008).

Deadlines:

Film Lions Entries	7 March 2008
Press Lions Entries	7 March 2008
Outdoors Lions Entries	7 March 2008
Design Lions Entries	14 March 2008
Direct Lions Entries	14 March 2008
Media Lions Entries	14 March 2008
Promo Lions Entries	14 March 2008
Radio Lions Entries	14 March 2008
Cyber Lions Entries	20 March 2008
Titanium and Integrated Lions Entries	20 March 2008

NEW in 2008:

Changes to Film Lions

This year, the Film section will be expanded to include categories for films created for transmission on screens other than TV and cinema, such as Internet films, Mobile films, Other screens and Interactive. Digital outdoor solutions and branded content can by used in categories in Film. Films made to be subjected for different screening.

New category: Design Lions

As previously announced, Design Lions will celebrate the creative and innovative use of design at all stages in the communication of brand and product messages. Categories will include Packaging Design, Brand Identity and Environmental Design. Entries will be awarded for Creativity, Originality, Execution and Consumer Engagement.

Delegate Registrations are already open, to attend the Festival, please go to www.canneslions.com.

BUSINESS Monday

Baguio music schools expand, stand test of time

Text by Desiree Caluza
Photos by Elmer Kristian Dadigay
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BRUCE Soriaoso

WIZARD'S white stripes are a an eye-catcher

BAGUIO CITY—JAIME TIAC TUAN, OWNER of three music schools in the country's summer capital—Music Music, Music World and Overtones—are singing happy tunes because they have been attracting the young and old to study music and to sing and play jazz.

"Music in Baguio is very much alive. We have developed so many talents here and we feel so much fulfilled," says Bernadette Antonio-Avila, chief executive officer and general manager of Music Music.

Music Music was started by the late Lorenzo Miano, a well-known pianist in Baguio, in 1979 as a piano store in Session Rd. Later, Music Music at the centennial grandstander of Avila.

It became a family corporation in 1980 when the musically-inclined Miano and Servaño families started to expand the music school.

The founders, mostly members of the Miano and Azevedo clans, would conduct piano and guitar lessons. Later the school started teaching violin.

"We developed our own curriculum and we hired very good teachers. Some music teachers in this city were trained in Miano. We make sure that our teachers undergo follow-up training and we subsidize their expenses. We want our students to learn quality music from our school," says Avila, also a pianist.

She claims that Music Music has become the biggest music school outside Metro Manila.

Miano offers lessons in piano, organ, voice, guitar, bass, saxophone, flute, clarinet, violin, cello, percussion, drums, voice, stage performance and musical theory.

Avila says the music school has become successful because they offer quality musical lessons which are affordable. A lesson for beginners costs P1,850 for 12 sessions.

Avila says their clients do not only come from Baguio but other provinces as well. "They would even come from La Union, Pangasinan, and as far as Manila because of our affordable tuition. Our tuition has no age limit," she says.

Music World

Music World is both a music school and a store. Bruce Soriaoso, owner of Music World, envisions putting up a branch outside the country like the United States. "We want to bring music and expand it from Baguio to the world," he says.

Soriaoso, a professional drummer, is also a product of a music school. He says pursuing up a music school was very risky but because he wanted to reach, he started the school with limited resources.

In August 1990, Soriaoso established Music World with his wife, Ethel Jane Llanes, a pianist from La Trinidad, Benguet.

The couple was determined to put up a school from their own resources.

Soriaoso would teach drums to students but would act as coinjector in putting up small classrooms on the second floor of the Allied Bank building here. Llanes, on the other hand, would act as the piano teacher, cashier, secretary and school director.

After three years, the school opened another branch in a duplex building on Session Road.

From two faculty members, the school hired 100 teachers who would teach various instruments from piano to wind instruments, percussion, string, voice lessons and musical theories.

"We have very good teachers who teach quality music and our rates are the cheapest among the music schools in Baguio. This is our unique selling point," Soriaoso says.

A beginner's lessons in Music World's many P1,422 for 12 sessions in all kinds of instruments and voice lessons.

Aside from teaching, the school, which doubles as a store, also earns from rental of instruments and sound systems.

Overtones

Overtones is the newest music school in Baguio City. While other schools cover all kinds of musical genres, Overtones specializes in lessons on wind instruments under the jazz genre.

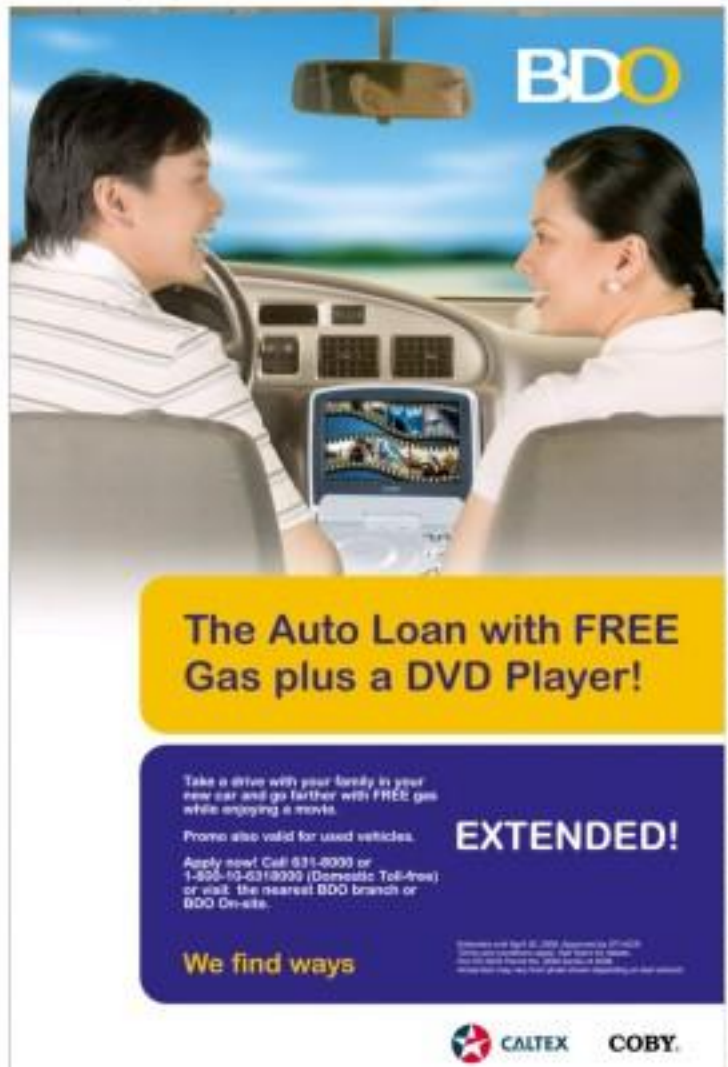
Located on Upper Mabini Street, the school is not only a music center but it has also a line with performances held every night.

"We started teaching saxophone then we expanded to guitar, piano, drums and voice lessons. We also teach our students to never come from stage fright by making them perform on the stage," says Jennifer Abalos, one of the owners of Overtones.

Abalos, the former city architect, says he decided to put up the school because of his passion for music. "I realized that there are lots of talent in Baguio which needs to be developed," says Abalos, a popular saxophonist and jazz musician here.

Running for almost two years, Overtones is preparing to be the last school because this is an area of music enthusiasts in Baguio who want to hone their talents, said Abalos.

A beginner's lesson costs P1,450 for 12 sessions, with special lessons or jazz improvisation.



'People helping people'

BE THE SOLUTION HOSPICE VISIT IN MEDINA, Hungaguy, old and terminally ill patients are treated with respect and dignity about 20 patients are treated in the hospice center at any one time while patients who choose to spend their last days in their homes are visited regularly by the hospice's volunteer workers.

The Medina hospice center is one of the projects of the Old Foundation set up in 1982 by Angela Henry Ty. There are two other hospice centers operating in the Western Visayas Center in Iloilo and the Quezon City General Hospital which the foundation supports with supplies of medicine and volunteers personnel.

Fifteen the foundation was set up, its core shared a partnership with communities in seven served by 50% in rehabilitate and affiliate. Health is one of the foundation's four areas of economy the three others being education, rural-based outreach programs and religious and community projects.

Realizing that many Filipino families cannot afford to pay for health and medical expenses, the Old Group of Companies embarked on the advocacy project. The health projects provides medical assistance to target communities through health missions and wellness extension programs.

Hospital activity centers established various, while it government hospitals are overcrowded and provided medical equipment. The centers aim to provide a therapeutic environment especially to acutely ill children through recreation rooms.

The centers include the Governing Warriors at the Pediatric Wellness Center, Hospice Care Units, Medicaid by Friends, and the Wellness Center for the Elderly. The foundation has conducted more than 300 medical and dental missions throughout the country. Last year, 57 medical and dental missions benefited close to 160,000 patients.

The medical and dental missions are conducted in partnership with the Department of Social Welfare and Development, Region 8A, Medical Foundations, local governmental units concerned, regional health centers, and community doctors.

BMU has a mobile clinic for diagnostic and laboratory procedures. Last year it acquired another mobile van. Patients who are seriously ill are brought or referred to hospitals for further medical therapy.

The Medical & Health Programs is headed by Connie Angeles. Angeles observes that the most common ailments are fever, cough and colds, hypertension, tuberculosis, hyperacidity and diabetes.

LIFESTYLE

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS • TUESDAY FITNESS • WEDNESDAY 2BU

Madarang holds retrospective

He organized PWU's Fine Arts program and helped restore Picasso's 'Guernica'

THE ARTIST

MASTER RESTORER/painter Mariano Madarang, 71, launches a major retrospective of his works at the Art Center of SM Megamall on Feb. 8.

Madarang is a protégé of the late National Artist Victorio Edades, dean of the University of Santo Tomas where Madarang finished Fine Arts under a Rotary Magsaysay scholarship.

He pursued advanced studies in visual and plastic arts under a Fulbright-Thomas grant at the East West Center of the University of Hawaii. He also received a John D. Rockefeller grant to an conservation/restoration training at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, under Dr. Rutherford Gettens. During that time, he did restoration on Picasso's "Guernica" and a large work of Claude Monet.

Madarang observed fresco and mural painting in Mexico at Academia de Bellas Artes, doing restoration work on Diego Rivera and Tamayo murals as well as on Aztec monuments in the Maya city of Chichen Itza on Yucatan Hotel.

Madarang attended the Tamarind print workshop of Jean Wiepin in Los Angeles and the art-restoration seminar of the British Royal Academy in London.

In the 1950s, Madarang organized the School of Fine Arts of the Philippine

MADARANG C2

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SAMSUNG

Joey Velasco's journey in art and life

By Chester R. Hualda
Contributor

"Hi Is My Way"

"LET There Be Peace On Earth"

PAINTING during rough hours

HE IS A TALE THAT'S BEGINNED by his altruistic deeds. But for Joey Velasco, the "Artist-in," as he describes himself, who once hosted a deadly mass in his kidneys, what he's doing is merely making use of what God has given him...the power to create and hasten changes in society for the better.

Darting and silver his hair with kidney disease, Velasco became motivated by the belief of God tutored in prayer. In 2005, he said he was "enveloped by blinding light." He suddenly wanted to paint.

He first attempts had him creating portraits of his loved ones, including the homeless. He moved on to people he saw on the streets.

His now-famous "Ating ng ibig sa," a drawing of an artist, came to be because he wanted his children to count their blessings in the face of street urchins who don't have food and shelter.

In his search for inspiration, Velasco found 112 children in poor districts around Metro Manila and Quezon City. After treating them to meals, Velasco took their pictures and returned to his room to start working on the painting.

The result is a depiction of the Last Supper, with Christ breaking bread with street children.

Today, the children featured in the painting are no longer in the areas where Velasco originally found them. Through his partnership with General Kalinga, an organization dedicated to sheltering the homeless, the 11 children and their families now have homes in Bonanza Caberra Village in Quezon City.

The children's stories are also featured in the book "They Have Jesus: The Stories of the Children of The Making."

Velasco's art and words of worry rose in his finding renewed meaning in life. A former television commercial director, he obviously still finds some connection with the work initiated by Saint John Bosco to take care of poor children, nothing to educate them in holiness.

Velasco has since created more pieces, including "Lest All Your Cares," "I Thirst," "Mga Munting Sirenas," "That We May Live," "They Will Be Done," "Mag" and "He Is My King."

The works have been exhibited in parish churches and unconventional places all over the country. Although many of them are not for sale, those received by them have contributed to charities to help the poor. This shows that Velasco's art is one that delivers changes...artistically, spiritually, mentally and socially.

Art in cycles

Today, Velasco still paints despite being in remission, perhaps owing to his lingering kidney disease.

"Over the past six months, my emotions and cares have been my connection to Mother Earth," he said. "I had fever to crunch pain, bedridden at times with some strange and debilitating infirmities in my feet and hands.

"In these months, we were even transferred to a small apartment where our world opened inwardly like turtles.

"I remembered in a small house where our beds and mattresses were just inches away from the sink and toilet. In such circumstances and trying times, it was almost impossible to paint."

Despite his difficulties, Velasco said he continued to paint, "as an act of faith."

His new works will be exhibited in his new show "Lasolas" at the University of Santo Tomas Museum of Arts and Sciences starting Feb. 5.

Velasco said, like painting, one's search for meaning in life was a process "where one starts from dark to light: to tone and to color."

He added: "Lasolas is a path, a road, the transcendence from dark to light."

Lasolas' will open tomorrow, 6 p.m., at the CCP Museum. (tel. 5571301). Gates of honor are 037 Sector Pt. Bulanik V de la Rosa, GP, #7 Francis Guerin, SOR; realtor Arthur Gamboa; and Antonio Mabini cp/General Kalinga.

"KALASAG"

"WATERFALL I"

Lascano's 'Waterfall' at Serendra

RICO LASCANO PRESENTS his latest offerings in "Waterfall" in Civil Gallery, L/2, Shops at Serendra, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig.

Lascano has been noted being a sequence of solo exhibitions that are interlinked by the same image. In his quiet, by still canvases interest the ripples of a brooks, streams and rivers, through a web of lines and an exhalation of open spaces envisioned on a meditative level. His passionate are in immersion in his aesthetics.

Water, regarded by Oriental philosophers as the "blood of Nature," courses through Lascano's art as a life-giving force.

The exhibition is the artist's continuing dialogue with this most refreshing and threatening element.

"Waterfall" opens 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (+639993113).

Daet hosts World Art Experience

DAET, CAPITAL OF CAMARINES NORTE IN Bicol, hosts the 2nd World Art Experience, Feb. 4-8.

WAE is an annual art convention organized by the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP).

According to Daet Mayor Tito Sarion, theme of the six-day fest is "Bringing the Millennium Development Goals Closer to the People." The goals are mentioned by the United Nations as priority undertakings by all nations and must be accomplished by 2015.

These are eradication of extreme poverty, ensuring environmental sustainability, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and other diseases; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women; improving maternal health; reducing child mortality; and developing global partnerships that promote development.

The goals will be portrayed by artists from Bicol and Aklan, Boracay, Ramon Orosan Publicos Group; architect Damian go Tabliac; scriptwriter Ricky Lee; Mabini Colleges Bicol Ambassadors Band; photographer Elmer Bachgaar; and painter-sculptor Joaquin Pobreza.

Sarion is an impressionist painter himself.

Painter-sculptor Jose Tabuso will give a talk on his popular paintings "Sinang ng Bayan" and "Sinang ng Pag-ibig."

The World Art Experience was inaugurated in Angeles, Bicol, last year.

Expected to grace this year's festival are President Macapagal-Arroyo, Bicolnon priest Fr. Fernando Suarez, LMP national president Jesus Typoco, Pangasinan, Mayor Ramon V. Guico Jr., Binalonan Lawn Legarda and Miguel Zubiri, and Philippine Tourism Authority general manager Ildefonso Jimbero.

For more information on the event, call Bicol at (054) 7117956; (054) 4484747 or 09202583892; or e-mail pinalnet_bicol@yahoo.com.

Madarang holds . . .

From page C1

Silliman's University, becoming its first director. He led his alma mater to record its art program's success via a defined Philippine identity.

In 1967, he was consultant to the Senate Committee on Culture, developing a cultural development program for young people in the arts. He also taught at the National Teachers College and gave free art lessons to the handicapped at Metropolitan Theater.

"EASTWOOD"

He opened opportunities for artists while he was a consultant for the Iconic Art Center, Print Gallery, Heritage Gallery and Quadro Inc., major movers of Philippine art in the '80s and '90s.

Not his lifetime dedication to the arts, he was named Artist Outstanding Alumnus in the Fine Arts during 1957's 36and Foundation anniversary. He was also a Golden Thomasian Awardee for his contributions to Philippine art.

As a distinguished woman, Chito Madarang has done work on the majority of our Philippine masters found in many private and corporate art collections.

Madarang is one of the Ten Outstanding Women of the Caraballena. He is the last child of the Barney tribe of Asan, Ifugao.

His retrospective, "Abstract Episodes," is a collection of acrylic paintings from 1995. Geometrical forms fuse with phosphorescent light bursts to resonating and memorable colors, tones and movements.

Ateneo alumni hold art auction

PROBES BY FERNANDO AMORSOLO, LAO Lianben, Mauro Malang Santos, and other artists in the Ateneo Art Gallery will be auctioned off in "Sinesla," the first art auction of the Ateneo Fine Arts Association (AFAA) for the benefit of the AFAA-Gerard Rollings (AFAA-GR) Lanao Student Village.

The auction will be held on Feb. 7 at the Ayuntamiento Ballroom, 2nd fl., Rockwell Global Village, Taguig.

Other pieces for auction include works by contemporary artists Reynold Vergara, Imelda de la Cruz and MM Yu, who have been recognized in the Ateneo Art Awards.

A pre-auction viewing will be held on Feb. 4-6 at the Sesenta Salas Pavilion.

"Sinesla" is made possible by PLDT Global, with the cooperation of Ayala Land's Corporate Social Responsibility Unit. Interested parties may contact Donna or tel. no. 426-6001 loc 6608.

"PAKIKIPAG-sex Child," by Pancho Piano

Pancho Piano's works to be raffled off in Naga

FIFTY PAINTINGS OF BICOLANO artist Pancho Piano will be raffled off to ticket-holders of the dinner-exhibit on Feb. 17, 7 p.m., at the Avenue Plaza Hotel in Naga City.

Presented by the Developmental Institute for Bicolano Artists (Dibai) Foundation, Inc., exhibit "Obra y Gamina sena Pancho" aims to raise funds for the scholarship of Bicolano art students. It will feature Piano's "Mother and Child" series.

Project director Lilibeth Goyagoy said that "owning a painting by Pancho Piano is the desire of all art collectors in Naga." The paintings will feature figurative and abstract renditions of Bicol art and culture, especially the Our Lady of Peñafrancia fiesta.

Dibai director is Amelita Zarsa.

PARAMAHS Chino's "We Are Not Afraid of Fire and We Will Race Your Ass" opens Feb. 7 in "Wind Gallery at SM Megamall. The show was inspired by the Rosenbergs indie rock band "To La Vendo's 2006 album. "The show is a tribute to my love for rock-and-roll and '70s blinds," says Ching. Call 634-1384.

Avellana sets 8 shows for 2008

FOR 2008, AVELLANA ART GALLERY is opening its exhibit on the eighth of every month.

Nestled among Americana-era bungalows and shaded by trees and tended gardens, Avellana Art Gallery on Ell. Harrison Street in Pasay City is a not-only where many prominent and promising artists converge, but is an interior designers, fashion designers, even writers.

Set Feb. 8, Avellana presents "Eight Couples" of artists Allan Gutierrez-Bel Avellana Cenit, Leo Limbero and Lilia Lee; Ani and Tessy Perejalo; Ferdinand Doroteo and Beth Pastrocha Dizoleno; Dan Bacalso and Eden Chan; Jojo Lobrasco and Charlyna Ty; Dei Jimdelosan and Rosario Sanchez; Aaron Pellejar and Isaac Cortes Pellejar.

Check how married artists complement one another in their works.

Avellana's exhibits for the rest of the year: "8 Treasures" for March 8; "The Silk

For April 8; "Survey Eight" for May 8; "Rebirth" for Aug. 8; "Eight Print Makers" for Sept. 8; "The 80's" for Oct. 8; and "Eight Faces" for Nov. 8.

On June, Avellana opens a special anniversary show, "Black Thursdays by Leo Limbero." It will open not on the eighth, but on June 12, the artist's birthday.

Call 8536057.

Rich ceramic legacy

DISHES with different designs

JAR with a dragon design

By Rita Tan
Contributor

THE PHILIPPINES PLAYED AN IMPORTANT role in the flourishing maritime trade that took place in the South China Sea hundreds of years ago. Textiles, ceramics brought to our islands through trade from China, Thailand and Vietnam during the precolonial and colonial periods are found in enormous quantities and treasured as valuable collector's items.

An engaging exhibition of Yuchengco Museum is "Zhangzhou Ware Found in the Philippines: Swatow Export Ceramics from Fujian, 16th-17th Century."

It is a joint project between the Oriental Ceramic Society of the Philippines (OCSP) and the Yuchengco Museum. The former was founded in 1980 and has over the years mounted various exhibitions on different groups of Chinese and Southeast Asian trade ceramics found in the Philippines and published their corresponding exhibition catalogs.

The 16th-17th century was an exciting period that saw the arrivals of the European traders—the Portuguese, the Spaniards and the Dutch—on this part of the world. They were initially looking for the ultimate source of spices—the Moluccas Islands—but soon discovered and exploited the lucrative trade with China.

The affluent Europeans traders soon began big quantities of Chinese ceramics for their home market. The newfound market in Europe became the fierce of Chinese porcelain from Jingdezhen, which had become the main ceramic-producing center in China. Ceramics from Kilns in Fujian were made chiefly to supplement the supply of China's ceramic trade to its rich customers in Asia.

The San Isidro shipwreck excavated near the coast of Lumbales area loaded with a ceramic cargo of almost exclusively Zhangzhou or Swatow ware. This type of ware also frequently appeared in the ceramic cargoes of wrecked ships destined for Europe, but in far less quantity than those from Jingdezhen, such as the San Diego shipwreck, which was a Spanish galleon originally bound for Acapulco but was converted into a battleship in an encounter with the Dutch. It sank on Dec. 14, 1600.

An interesting feature of the exhibition and its catalog is the inclusion of materials recovered from the two above-mentioned shipwrecks. It is like bringing history back to life—history of the Philippines' liaison involvement in the Asian shipping trade.

Majority of the exhibition pieces are from the collections of the members of the OCSP. The display of over 130 pieces of Zhangzhou ware in the exhibition illustrates the variety of the ware exported in the Philippines some 400 years ago.

The blue-and-white ware is the core of Zhangzhou ware, although it comes in a few other varieties, including monochrome ware with lightly incised designs; monochrome ware with slip decorations, and polychrome ware with overglaze enamels. The exhibition is complete with examples of all types of Zhangzhou ware.

Known for its charm and rustic appeal, Zhangzhou ware is a favorite among local, Southeast Asian and Japanese collectors. It is now gaining popularity in Europe as well.

The exhibition runs until April 5.

Yuchengco Museum is at G/F RCBC Plaza, Gilmer Ayala and Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenues, Makati City. Museum hours are 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Monday-Saturday. For more information, call 8903234 or e-mail rcbc@yuchengcomuseum.org. Visit www.yuchengcomuseum.org.

On Feb. 14, 10:30 a.m., Dr. Avelino Rita Ching Tan, OCSP president, will give a talk about the creation of the Chinese trade ware and the kilns of the Zhangzhou cluster of Fujian province during the Ming dynasty. The artistic and symbolic beauty of Zhangzhou ware will also be explored. Following the talk, she will lead a special public tour of the exhibit.

She received her master's degree in Art and Archaeology from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

Reservations for the talk and guided tour are required. For reservations and details, call 8903234 or e-mail info@yuchengcomuseum.org.

BLUE and white vases

OPENING rite exhibit are Felinda Pamilio; guest curator and OCSP president Rita Tan; RCBC chair Helen Yuchengco Dee; ArtPostAsia managing director Tina Crispolo; and painter Lanelle Abanes-Fernando

Visual storyteller par excellence

"VERBAL Abuse"

By Constantino C. Tejero

GLUA CORDERO-FERNANDO, another host of writers, artists, fashionistas and technocrats, has proven herself to be a jane-of-all-trades in the arts.

Through the years she has parlayed her considerable talent in literature (essay, short story, review, journal, travelogue, curriculum), book publishing (coffee-table books), theater (script, concept, design), and the visual arts (painting, drawing, etc.). On top of that, she dabbles in the supernatural (reading the mystics).

Declaring Nick Joaquin as her supreme Filipino artist, Cordero-Fernando naturally shares in her works the narrative bent and verbal flair of the late National Artist for Literature. (Come to think of it, why haven't anyone thought of nominating her herself for that honor?)

These literary elements manifest themselves every in her artworks. The storytelling can be apprehended in the illustrative quality of her paintings and sketches, while the flair for words has metamorphosized into an unpretentious use of text.

Of visual artists, she has avowed fealty to Danny Dalena, Orly Olmedo and Roberto Feleo, the first two are leading figurative expressionists and her mentors at one time or another... and that also shows in her metaphorical line and color.

Quirky composition

A lifetime's worth of Cordero-Fernando's foray into the visual arts was recently displayed in "Instinct: Motion", 31 pieces in watercolor on paper, in La Galeria de Arnulfo Agustin, Antonio Drive, Rockwell Center, Makati City.

Billed as "an exhibit of death-defying paintings," probably alluding to the fact that she is a late bloomer in painting, the show has for title a direct reference to the artist's age.

"I am now 59," she says, "and might not be able to come up with as much stuff in a single show again."

Here are her characteristic amusing imagery and quirky composition, flowing lines and repeat forms, primary and secondary colors that are pure, flat and bright. The satiric bent is not consistently manifested in both imagery and title. This is the epitome of illustration art, blending skill and figurative expressionism.

Cordero-Fernando describes her show as "paintings of zodiac animals, people, otherworldly creatures and some precise stuff." (Was the artworks subdivided in several series of various interests and concerns).

"Animalia" comprises zodiac animals adorned with repeat lines and patches of color. Typical are "Bromia," "Blueparade Bull," "Dragon and Other Denizens of the Mind"—as explore with repeat forms they've become abstracted and the viewer can hardly see the lesser from the forest of overdecoration.

Fable characters

Not all are zodiac animals, though, as there are the giraffe, eagle and what look like hybrid frogs in the series called "Animal Rights." With a rule animating each piece, these could very well be characters from fable.

They embody the "protest motif," chiefly ecological, political, economic and societal, local and global. But they're motivated with urbane wit, in playful forms and Guy-Gio colors—the visual equivalent of a gentle ribbing—as that artist's supposed to be scathing becomes smile-inducing, and life moves on home.

"The Right to One's Body" shows a couple that seems on for enfolding, and to complete the narrative the artist has appended a subtitle: "Haven Richard Scribade to Get It My Pants?"

The male, rendered in a sickly green, is sharp-eyed and fire snorting, while the female, in a healthy reddish glow, looks shy, but more disturbing, the two are of different species, she a sow and he a hybrid of horse, lion and dragon.

The dominating male is playfully depicted in pieces such as "Nurturing" subtitled "The Last Shoulder All Mothers"; and "Verbal Abuse," subtitled "This House Can Only Have One Master!"

Meanwhile, the submissive female is jokingly portrayed in pieces such as "Trouble Brother," subtitled "Breadwinner and Housekeeper, no?"; and "Emotional Battery," subtitled "Unappreciated Mrs. Dog Goes Home to Mama," to which domestic violence haunts the imagery.

Charming portraiture

"Instinct to Souls," subtitled "The Right to Devour Wages," has a row of elegantly posed, bright-eyed colorful giraffes wearing the traditional veils of Middle Eastern women. This would have been hilarious if it were not frightening.

The series called "Humanoids" presents with worldly and otherworldly creatures from fairies to genies, as what the artist calls "beings and phenomena." People she knows can be heavenly immortalized in charming portraiture, such as "A Parmen Baba, Sylvia and Ignot Sara."

"Ten Dream Dreams," to which the reading is continued with the series of small, square to be a portrait of another artist, sculptor Jake Doth One we could be wrong!

Another piece appears to be no more than a segmented portrait of Tess Maria until one reads its title: "Fairies of Meadows Humming Cranks in the Mountain," with the alternative title "Bobaybata Delivering the Blessings of the Mountains."

In many such pieces, particularly in her use of implicit title and subtitle, the visual artist in Cordero-Fernando clearly assists with the writer in her to any painting of hers, only with the written word can see yet the full story.

"DOMESTICS to Land"

"DOUBLE Barrier"

LIFESTYLE

Kabuki in Manila

DESIGNATED AS ONE OF JAPAN'S finest traditional arts, kabuki stands as a distinct theater form which continues to evolve and capture a new generation of enthusiasts.

This month, Manila will have a rare opportunity to have an intimate look into the Unesco-proclaimed Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

The Japan Foundation Manila, with support from the Embassy of Japan, presents "Delight of Kabuki: Demonstration and Lecture," a Shochiku Co. Ltd. production, Feb. 7 at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, SEDC Plaza, Ayala and Makati Avenues, Makati City (here starts at 9:30).

The blend engagements features acclaimed kabuki actors Ajiroo Nakamura and Matsusuke Nakamura performing "Tsuji Ishiyama," one of the most powerful classical dances for youngsters or female characters, and the "Shibaraku," a heroic dance for the multiples or male characters.

The performance will be followed by a lecture tracing the development of the Kabuki costumes and principal stage and theater each as applying makeup for kabuki.

Ajiroo Nakamura started his professional career as a member of the Nakamura Jakuemon IV family in 1992. Since then, his professional career has flourished. He is an authorized holder of the important intangible Cultural Property Kabuki (collective recognition).

"A Night of Kabuki" is by invitation only. Call 403-8332, 55 or e-mail mnl@jpf.go.jp.

Ballet Manila pays tribute to Tony Fabella

An institution in Philippine dance, Fabella is battling colon cancer

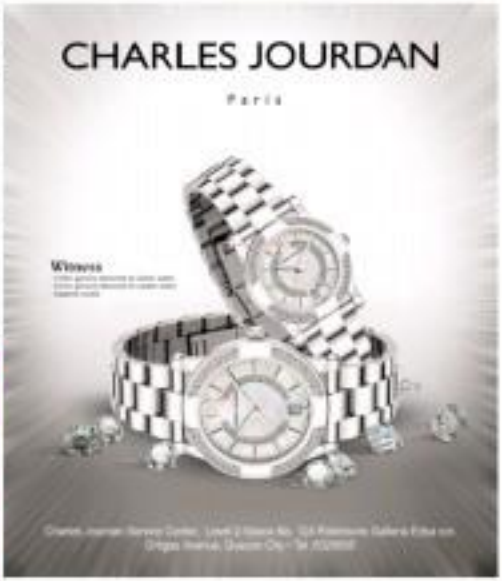
BALLET MANILA, LED BY ARTISTIC director and prima ballerina Lisa Macuja-Elizalde, will mount "Ballet Manila Dances Fabella" for the benefit of ailing choreographer and dance mentor Tony Fabella on Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m., at Star Theater, CCP Complex, Roxas City.

The special, one-night only gala show will include some of the most memorable dance pieces Fabella has choreographed especially for Bal, such as "Dancing to Carmag" "Dancing to Verdi," "Seven Pieces" and "Tuluyang Pilipino."

A Fabella masterpiece, "Tanikal at Paldak," courtesy of the Quezon City Performing Arts under artistic director Luther Peters, will also be performed.

Ballet Philippines will render a number as a tribute to Fabella.

An institution in Philippine dance, Fabella was recently diagnosed with colon cancer and has been undergoing radiation therapy



Swashbuckling adventure and romance in 'Le Corsaire'

LISA Macuja-Elizalde as Medora with the Nubia in Ballet Manila's "Le Corsaire"

BALLET MANILA ENDS ITS 2007 CONCERT SEASON ON A high note... and on the high seas!

Reliving the adventures of swashbuckling heroes searching for buried treasure and rescuing damsels in distress in 1M romages the classical staple "Le Corsaire" (The Pirate) starting Feb. 15 at Star Theater, in an all-star cast led by artistic director and prima ballerina Lisa Macuja-Elizalde.

Based on Lord Byron's poem "The Corsair," the three-act ballet centers on a Greek girl, Medora, sold into slavery but miraculously saved by the pirate Conrad. They fall in love and together face seemingly insurmountable hardships, culminating in their scandalous voyage together.

Cast as Medora is Lisa Macuja-Elizalde, with company member Nonoy Saliguin in his biggest break as the dashing Conrad. Alternating are senior soloist Mylene Aggabao and soloist Mike Guevarra in the same roles.

Providing support is Ballet Manila's 40-strong ensemble of classically trained soloists and corps de ballet.

Managing the ballet is BM's artistic associate and ballet master Dana Barroso.

"Le Corsaire" goes onstage Feb. 15-17 and 23-24 at the Star Theater (inside Star City, CCP Complex, Pasay City.

MACUJA-ELIZALDE in action

For tickets and performance schedules, contact Ballet Manila at 4000392 or 5255907. E-mail info@balletmanila.ph or log on to www.balletmanila.ph.

Ballet Manila pays tribute to Tony Fabella

From page D1

to combat the disease while still in its early stages.

"Tony Fabella is one of the country's most talented and most prolific choreographers," said Macuja-Elizalde. "He is also a person who is fun and easy to work with, generous and creative—a really good soul. He has given many choreographic gems to Ballet Manila and to—no, personally, as gifts of his wonderful talent, without asking for remuneration for such beautiful and intricate works that always delight the audiences. The least we can do for him during this difficult time is help raise financial support for his medication and pray for his full recovery."

Fabella received the National Commission on Culture and the Arts' 2003 dish ng Haraya Award.

Call Ballet Manila at 5255907 or log on to www.balletmanila.ph.

Zamboanga City hosts National Theater Festival

WESTERN MINDANAO STATE University (WMSU) and the Association of Creative and Performing Arts of Zamboanga, Inc. will host the second National University Theater Festival, "Tanghal 2," Feb. 19-23 at the Dr. Juanito Remo Gym, WMSU, Baliwasan, Zamboanga City.

The festival is in cooperation with the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA), the NCCA National Committee on Dramatic Arts and the local government. This year's festival theme is "Theater ng Kabisayaan: Tuntungan/Ibayuan."

The festival is a highlight of National Arts Month, which—since lawyers in Philippine Arts Festival, Ani ng Sining, Pamana ng Lahi.

Roberto B. Torres, WMSU vice president for external affairs and National Theater Festival coordinator, says the performers are: Iloilo Theater Guild from Dulaan State University, Iloilo; Dulaan Pinay Theater of Miriam College, Quezon City; Teatro Libertad from Ateneo de Davao University; Ateneo Blue Repertory Theater of Ateneo de Manila University; Dulaan Theater Arts Guild from Philippine Normal University, Manila; Teatro Libertad of Philosophy Bacolod City; and Integrated Performing Arts Guild from MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology, Iligan City.

The WMSU University Theatre Guild and Kadayon Theatre Guild from Cotagan Sur, Agusan, Surigao City, will also perform.

Super presentors are Elroy Abrazado, Dulcesan Pinay Theater of Miriam College, Quezon City; Teatro Libertad from Sacred Heart Seminary, School of Philosophy Bacolod City; and Integrated Performing Arts Guild from MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology, Iligan City.

The WMSU University Theatre Guild and Kadayon Theatre Guild from Cotagan Sur, Agusan, Surigao City, will also perform.

Super presentors are Elroy Antonan, Mark Lucas, Steven Patrick Fernandez, Edward Perez and Tanya Lopez.

Workshops are on basic acting and production design by Frederick Castro; theater production documentation by Antonio, directing technical theater by Armani Ata Amat, scriptwriting by Perez; dance theater production by Feliman Blanco.

Registration is until Feb. 20. Call Zenaida Torres at 0908-9130852 or telefax 0912-1444.

World Pool Championship, bakit hindi?

– Efren "Bata" Reyes

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

STEERING committee and board of advisers of La Musica Española. Seated: Nestor Jardin, CCP president; Ambassador Isabel Wilson; CCP trustee; Zenaida Tantoco, CCP trustee; Madam Soledad Larrea Arias, wife of Ambassador Luis Arias of Spain; and Carolina Bernardo, board of advisers chair; wife of Ambassador Luis Bernardo, Philippine Ambassador to Spain. Standing: Jose Rodrigues, Instituto Cervantes director; Lulu Rodrigues, wife of Senor Jose Rodriguez; Ivan Francisco, steering committee co-chair and Philippine Telstar managing director; and Mari Barua, Pilar Gutierrez and Pilar Barrenechea, board of advisers members

Spanish maestro Ferrero: man with a mission

By Amadis Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

IBERIAN MAESTRO HERNANDO Adrian Ferrero is, you might say, a man with a mission: to disseminate and preserve the folkloric music of various countries. Another important mission would be to introduce the works of Filipino composers to audiences in Europe, especially Spain.

Ferrero, 45, and a native of Valencia, Spain, is a distinguished conductor-composer who has won many international awards and directed symphony orchestras in Europe, United States and Japan.

He was in town to direct the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (PPO) in "La Musica Española," a benefit concert to raise funds to improve and maintain the quality of PPO instruments.

Performed were works of Bizet—le Chapi, F. Moreno Torroba, Salvador Giner, Jeronimo Gimenez and Fermeo Isturiel.

His compatriot "El 4 Octubre" is a major four-part symphonic poem which commemorates the victory of the Christians against the Moors in Valencia in the 12th century.

In an interview at Manila Peninsula, speaking in Spanish, Ferrero said: "Europeans are familiar with the works of many composers, but don't know much about the music of composers outside Europe."

He added: "I am interested in Philippine music and would like to have this played in Spain. I would like to bring the works of Filipino composers, and also bring Filipino musicians, to Spain."

The maestro said he had come across a composition titled "Sa Filipinas a España" but regretted having forgotten the name of the composer.

'Carambu'

"It would be very interesting to bring the Philippine orchestra (PPO) to Spain in the future," Ferrero said.

"And then I would favor Philippine music and interpreters. This would be very fortunate because at this time Spain does not favor Philippine music and soloists. In Spain, people like to listen to something that they are not aware of. So if they listen to Philippine music they would exclaim, Carambu! how come we don't know this music...."

Ferrero went to another major concern.

In Spain, he said, "we have recovered [recuperado] much popular music, and there are new in records [discos] and books. This music is usually preserved by an elderly person, but if he or she dies without remembering the music, then that music dies too."

Ferrero added: "I hope that you [Filipinos] have also recovered the folkloric elements in your music."

One of the maestro's undertakings is to meet an elderly exponent of folkloric elements in our music or oration/traditional music. Sana *yumaos* (it reborns also), "bill him or her on an issues [pinoy sil] and cases asked the conductor in public [please sing the songs of your region]. Y ello cantó... [and she sings]."

And then the songs are recorded and documented.

Ferrero concluded: "A country is more respected if it is more cultured [mas culto], steeped in art and all the manifestations of culture."

ANA Feleo

OSCAR Yatco

Yatco-led PPO plays Maramba music

"PHILIPPINE OPERA HIGHLIGHTS" will be the main theme of the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (PPO) Concert Season VI on Feb. 8, 8 p.m., at the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Tanghalang Manuel Antonio (Main Theater).

Conductor-baritone Oscar Yatco will lead the PPO. A pre-concert chat will be held on the lobby at 7 p.m.

Program includes excerpts from Fr. Mercadante's "La Vestal," "Ang Sarsuela sa Ilaw Salambao," "Bituin Sto.Niño" and "Tinipunang Ulan."

The concert also includes excerpts from Ryan Cayabyab's opera "Sperfuritan," Felipe de Leon's "Awit ke Tangere" and Francisco Feliciano's "La Loba Negra".

Yatco served as the resident conductor of the Manila Symphony Orchestra, Asia's oldest symphony orchestra, in 1974, he became the principal violist of the National Theater Orchestra in Mannheim, Germany.

In 1978-1983, Yatco was the concert master of the prestigious Wagner Festival Orchestra in Bayreuth. He was also appointed professor of violin at the State Academy of Music in Hannover in 1979.

He was the former music director and principal conductor of the PPO and was instrumental in elevating the status of PPO as the country's national orchestra. Yatco was honored with the title "conductor laureate" by the CCP in 1997.

The concert will feature segments Amelia Bertana, Soraya Espina, Ana Feleo, Joy Absalon-Tamayo, Elcilia Medina, tenors Bernant Fortez, Randy Gilvoga, Rodolfo Ong and Eugene de los Santos; baritone Lee Lapiz; and the UST Liturgikon Vocal Ensemble.

Tickets are at P550, P500, P350 and P900, with discounts for students, senior citizens and groups.

Call 8521122 local 1806, 8522704, 8919999. Visit www.culturalcenter.ph.

RANDY Gilvoga

Humor book on annulment

SHUTTERBEE PUBLISHING INC. has recently released "Much I Do About Nothing: Easy lessons on the annulment Lawyer with Spouses of Superheroes" by lawyer Ornie Marlin.

In this one-of-its-kind book, Marlin provides the reader with lots of laughter and information on the annulment and nullity of marriages and even on legal separation.

The information is painlessly conveyed through easy, hilarious, imaginary interviews with a host of strange characters.

There is an interview with Mrs. Superman, who wishes to separate from her husband because his wife is having an affair with Invisible Man.

The interviews are interspersed with expert legal information on the dissolution of marriages in the Philippines.

There are also separate sections that provide guidelines and tips on how to go about dissolving a marriage for those who need to do it, as well as for those who are simply interested in the subject. All the information on the dissolution of marriages is written by lawyers in simple terms sans legal jargon.

Martin worked for years as a lawyer on marriage cases in the Office of the Solicitor General. As a law student at Ateneo, he worked as a scriptwriter for the popular TV comedy "Mongolian Barbecue."

"Much I Do About Nothing" is available at National Book Store, Power Books, Books for Less and other major book stores.

Call 7216451 or e-mail mlbarre@philsa.net.

The best Valentine's gift - a sparkling diamond studded Crystal Frost necklace!

It's going to be a very cool Valentine's both this February 12 as Clozetph almost Lovepreneurs gives couples something extra special. In this year's tentative Closet to Lovepreneurs Frost Fest, 100 lucky couples with the most sexy, cool talking photos will win specially crafted diamond-studded Crystal Frost necklaces. Clozetph puts out all the stops to make this exclusive party the coolest date! Frost Fest location, food, prizes, etc. so couples can unpack great entertainment, breathtaking ambiances, so cool treats and the perfect diamond-studded Crystal Frost necklace to cap the romantic evening.

Enhanced with the Crystal Frost necklaces special

jewelries design by Ms. Diamanchi (Italian Id. Fabiano), a jewelry lu-minary and a graduate of the Gemological Institute of America. Now in the countries for 15 years, Italian & 24K enamelled diamond expert. "The fine Italy Diamond style was put up in 1997, and right now we have two shops," shares Gabriel. It isn't the first time that Italy Diamond was tapped to design and produce such a big set of specially designed jewelry.

"We've done lots of necklaces before, with a world-renowned watch brand. We can truly say that we have a sense of versatility."

Coming up with the perfect Crystal Frost necklace was a collective artistic challenge. "It's 18k white gold, and hand made. It's one of a kind because we don't sell this in the stores, we made it specifically for Clozetph. Our designer made the original sketch, while I did the intricate design of the round brilliant cut in the middle. Ten stop. Then the positive cars are very good, it gives certain balance and creates sparkling effects. It's also worth letting you note some examples. It can go with formal, semi-formal or casual attire."

Besides nothing that says forever quite like a diamond, as 100 lucky, romantic Lovepreneurs winners will discover the Valentine's bag. Diamonds are almost indestructible, why lose ones not-so-always-been the perfect gift to someone so much in love with. It's always been the perfect symbol of devotion and love."

Get a chance to be one of 100 winners of the limited edition Crystal Frost diamond studded necklace and will be a key part of the exclusive Lovepreneurs Frost Fest. Just send your name, phone number and a photo of you and your tender feeling to closetpet@yahoogroups.com or to #setcash at 160 Pasig Blvd., Pasig City. Submission of entries go for as long as 5 only. Lovepreneurs Frost Fest is inspired by Mike Closetph Crystal Frost - with crystal-clear gemstones for icy cool looks.

'The Bucket List' is sort of a film version of Patricia Schultz's '1,000 Places to See Before You Die: A Traveler's Life List' and Karol Jackowski's 'Ten Fun Things to Do Before You Die'

MORGAN Freeman and Jack Nicholson perform ageing characters with not much time on their hands.

FROM BOOK TO FILM

Things to do before you die

By Eleanor R. Hurtis
Contributor

GIVEN THAT IT'S JACK NICHOLSON and Morgan Freeman sharing equal billing in "The Bucket List," it still doesn't look how poorly written it is.

For what it's worth, the only thing that Nicholson and Freeman did was elevate it to decency with their effortless portrayals of two aspiring men, Edward Cole and Carter Chambers, strangers to each other but who go away on a trip and do the "craziest" things after finding out they only have less than a year to live due to cancer.

Life, then, as they are affectionately called, have been wasted for a while especially since the baby-boomer generation learned to appreciate making their own. It has given rise to books such as Patricia Schultz's "1,000 Places to See Before You Die: A Traveler's Life List" and Karol Jackowski "Ten Fun Things to Do Before You Die."

"Bucket List" gives its take on the life list as experienced by Cole, a billionaire hospital magnate, and Chambers, a car mechanic, for the past 40 plus years. Despite their obvious differences in social standing, they share the same room at Cole's hospital. Should anyone have imagined that?

PRINCETON, character's try anything before they kick the bucket.

It is here we learn that Cole has been married and divorced multiple times and is dependent on his assistant, Matthew, a.k.a. Thomas (Sean Hayes), to manage his tasks.

Chambers is a "hospitality" fanatic, hopes of becoming a history teacher, and is happily married to a nurse, Virginia (Beverly Todd).

Chambers then comes up with his "bucket list," things he would like to do before he "kicks the bucket." It doesn't need any convincing for Cole to inject his own ideas to the list and the two go on their trip, much to the chagrin of Virginia.

Their adventure takes them to Egypt, Hong Kong, China, etc., with the worst of Freeman's character mainly exciting lines that, honestly, border on overkill.

Just in Taiwan he said that his bad Freeman's voice in his head when he was writing the script. Perhaps he was too forward on the actor's predilection for editorial characters rather than making sure the story would be able to stand on its own. It's as if the audience would not be able to get the meaning of "living life to the fullest" on their own.

"Bucket List" does not really do anything that has not probably been done before, and Nicholson and Freeman have played characters similar to Cole and Chambers many times already.

But it is easy to appreciate the like and really hard to hate it because of the two lead actors' performances and, clearly, the film was done with older viewers in mind.

'Orosman at Zafira' from Dulaang UP

DULAANG UP'S FOURTH OFFERING FOR its 32nd theater season is a Filipino classic about love, honor and war – Francisco Balagtas's "Orosman at Zafira."

Considered as one of the best written literary pieces by the Prince of Tagalog Poetry, "Orosman at Zafira" tells the story of men's lust for power while highlighting the woman characters and how they challenge prevailing social norms and restrictions.

The cast includes Maria Nono (as Zafira), Arnold Reyes and Leo Martinez (as Orosman Mulalay), JC Santos (as Zulieta), Ricky Pe (as Boabdonil), Stella Cuevas and Joan Judith Linsangan (as Halimah), Hazel Manansala-Tan (hara and Manuba Zaforen (as Dolima).

Movement, choreography and direction are by Denver Santos. The original neo-folk music is composed by Philippines's lead vocalist Carol Bello.

Other members of the artistic team are Ariel Tinoco (director), Tange Benaojo (production designer) and John Sotelo (lighting designer).

"Orosman at Zafira" is part of the first International Komedya Fiesta of the UP Centennial Celebration, and will be staged Feb. 12 – March 2 at the Wilfrido Ma. Guerrero Theater, 2/F, Palma Hall, UP Diliman, QC.

Call 9261401, 9217999, 9810500 loc 2499 or 0917 6206224. Visit www.ateneo.edu/ateneo.multiply.com

Ronald Baytan's first book of poems

POET AND CULTIC WORLD SPEAKS! recently released his first collection of poems, "Da Queen Sings the Blues."

Published by Anvil, the book brings together 47 poems written between 1992 and 2002. In this book, the queen croons the blues of "songs of the vulnerable heart."

From the first impulses of love, the poems move to the different phases and faces of an infused existence—a descent's musings on the curiosities of desire; from bedchambers to bars, from trains to rooms, from the closet to the stage.

J. Neil C. Garcia, co-editor of the "Lalaf" series, writes: "The reader can only be blessed in the presence of such smiles, the majesty and benevolence of this poet's bravely loving and sexual imagination."

Baytan teaches literature at De La Salle University-Manila. He finished his Ph.D. in Popular Studies at University of the Philippines-Diliman.

He is a co-editor of "Bangga Ka, Tita: Pinoy Gay Quotes to Live by" (Milflores, 2002). He is working on "The Queen Lives Alone: Personal Essays."

The book is available at Powerbooks and National Book Store.

Olympics art contest

THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITtee (IOC) through its Commission for Culture and Olympic Education is launching an Olympic Sport and Art Contest in connection with the XXIX Olympiad in Beijing, in 2008.

The contest has two categories: sculptures and graphic works (paintings, drawings, engravings).

The theme is "Sport and Olympism."

The contest is open to artists born countries with a recognized National Olympics Committee and will consist of two stages: a national phase and an international phase.

The prizes are US$30,000 and a diploma for the first prize; $20,000 and a diploma for the second prize; $10,000 and a diploma for the third prize; five diplomas for runners-up.

Deadline of submission is the Philippine Olympic Committee (Olira, Pasig City) is Feb. 15.

Visit http://www.olympic.ph/artcontest2008.html, call 09178007606.

Valentine reads

A good book can be a great companion this Valentine's Day. Whether you are a devout in-the-know, a dating diva, or part of a dynamic duo, National Book Store has the perfect book to suit your love story.

All about Me (P320) and The Book of Me (P320) are self-explanatory and record precious moments of your relationship. These journal-type homework not only chronicle the story of your love, but also help you get to know your partner even more.

Are You Made for Each Other? (P300) is the ultimate relationship quiz book. Put each other to the test and find out just how well you know your partner.

Falling in Love for Dummies and When Right Becomes Perfect (P320) will equip you with useful and practical information so you know right off the bat whether you've found the one or are just wasting your time.

You don't have to kiss 100 frogs to find your prince or princess. In Love Will Find You (P175), discover intuitive magnets to bring your partner soul-side together.

It's Not You, It's Him (P300) will help you find the love you've always dreamed of. It offers insight on how you can best happy and be in control of your dating life with a no-nonsense approach to dating.

The best-selling He's Just Not That Into You (P350.00) offers women valuable insights into the male brain. After passing females from different walks of life, they have based on an episode of "Sex and the City" explores common dating dilemmas and prompts women when to move on.

On the dorkier side, there's Blue and Raw (P165), the laughs, jokes, and humorous guide to overcoming the fear of commitment.

How can we protect them?

– Jaime Cardinal Sin

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Broken heart

LOS ANGELES—In her first statement since the death of her former companion Heath Ledger, actress Michelle Williams pleaded for privacy for their daughter Matilda and herself. "Please respect our need to grieve privately," Williams said in a statement released Friday. "My heart is broken." Page E5

KIDLAT Garcia on the poster of Jay Abando's digital film

'Ang Lihim ni Antonio' tonight in UP

By Marinel R. Cruz

JAY ALTARESO'S DIGITAL FILM, 'Ang Lihim ni Antonio (Antonio's Secret),' a tale of love and sexual exploration, will have its world premiere 7:30 tonight at the UP Film Institute.

Antonio (Benji Gavita) is a curious teen who's just coming to terms with his sexuality. His search for identity unfolds as his family breaks up. His mother (Shoreuine Hernandez) cannot believe that her husband has abandoned them. Tragedy looms as Antonio meets his cyclic Another (Josh Ivan Morales), who becomes his sexual obsession.

"Lihim" follows Altaresó' "Ang Lalake sa Balete," voted "B" by the Cinema Evaluation Board for "innovative storytelling." It was reportedly the top grosser among digital films shown in Robinson's Cinemas last year.

Written by Lee Brandt, the film is a co-production of Neuromedia and Digital Idea.

Off to France

Meanwhile, Antonio Aviles's "Pisay," to open nationally this summer, is the 54th "Panorama International Film Festival of Asian Cinema in France, the oldest and largest Asian film fest in Europe, ongoing till tomorrow.

"Pisay," about the struggles of eight students of Philippine Science High School during the politically volatile '80s, won Best Director and Best Production Design awards in Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival 2007.

The Film Development Council of the Philippines funded Aviles's trip to France, as well as those of actors EJ Jallorina, Carl Buenaventa, Claudine Najera and production designer Mark "Hal" Ballesteros, fellow cast the keynote.

In a review published October 2007 in the influential Cahiers du Cinema magazine, critic Emmanuel Burdeau described "Pisay," thus: "Beautiful ... simple and sophisticated, direct and unique ... gets better as it goes along. The promise is realized for [allof] Filipino cinema, which is undergoing something of a renaissance."

"Pisay's" Israeli theatrical run starts Feb. 20.

'Selda'

Mare Andie notes: Sid Lucero is this year's funniest Singlar But Actor award for his role as Rommel, a young man who accidentally kills a boy and goes to prison for it, in the Pinoy Indie-film-Zaren film, "Selda."

The Singlar (a.k.a. Gawad Tagapiling mga Manlilikha ng Bansang Gumagalaw) for Best Supporting Actor was shared by Emilio Garcia and Michael de Mesa, for the same movie.

"Selda," which also bagged the Best Editing and Best Cinematography awards, will be screened at Robinsons Indie-nia Feb. 13 to 19.

The film, Villalona and Zaren's follow-up to the critically acclaimed "Batang," also stars Ina Silva, Soliman Cruz and Ping Medina.

A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA

A-LIPAS

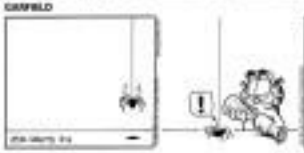
By JOEL ABEÑA

PUGAD BABOY

BY PIC. JUNIOR

GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS



BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

ATOMIC AND WEEGY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

LOVEHUNGRY

BY ELIZABETH CHICHILLO

BRAIN MACHINE

BY MARIA AMEDA

BRAIN MACHINE
ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!
ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!
ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

Greta charms her way back to Tonyboy's heart

BY IOPI ZTORRE HROOT
Gretchen Barretto's latest "rejuvenation" must be causing one of your ears. Was before it for the headlines, I had reviews about Greta's trysts with businessman Dodot Yuson.

Knowing Greta, she's enjoying all the attention. I remember when I got embroiled in a controversy, Greta told me to just ITI, "Girl, you're stealing the thunder from me."

She's one woman who reasons being ignored. And certainly that's not what her longtime partner Tonyboy Cojuangco will ever do. He loves her too much.

"She never left Dianna. Never irresponsible to Barretto and never style nalin," said Dodot's friends friend. "Whatever she had with Dodot, I don't know when it started. The important thing is after all is said and done, she's still Tonyboy po rin. In fact, they are celebrating their anniversary soon."

Greta knows how to charm her way into Barretto's heart after her foolish escapade and temporary thrills. As a director puts it, "What a sensible move Greta had. I seem to think what she's taking!"

Many more John Estrudas and Dodot Yusons may come in and out of Greta's orbit but her Tonyboy Cojuangco will remain. If he always manages to forgive her, why can't we?

Met Living La Vida Local. She can have her cake and eat it, too. The party's never over for her.

Dolly Ann Carvajal

Only a demo!

Ex-lovers Alessandra de Rossi and Jeremy Marquez rumored a connection in Pearl Nails, Davao during a cold event. They ran the whole gamut of emotions, which only goes to show that they still haven't fully recovered from their breakup.

At one point, Alex was seen "shopping" Jeremy. Was this some sort of an ex-lovers' "Mga dinadaanan ako sa kanya-kanyang pamamaraan" thing? Bitterness ang ng Kuha ng dating ex. Dito naman ngali-nasi-amped kalo na mga sinisinta pa din," explained Alex. "Dami ko talaga maging friends kaya nagiging mamamang mamon bakit di pwede. Ang daming nangyari to hanggang ngayon di ko pa rin maintindihan."

Any hope for reconciliation? "Ay sorry. Subra akong na-hurt. Tatanan na siya sa akin!" Looks like not even St. Valentine can give their hearts a second lease on love. And they live happily ever after!

'Katrabaho'

Dilok Joey Reyes dirugo all talk that he signed a three-picture non-exclusive contract with GMA Films because he felt slighted when he wasn't invited to the 25th premiere of his hit movie with Star Cinema "Dilan, Babal, Jubilee"). "Pero eto, it's not a matter of being favoritismo or bigayan but katrabaho," he stressed. "I want to work with an indie auteur or I can, to spread my wings and not limit myself."

Dilok is too passionate to be contained!

'Your Song'

The months of romance, superlove is now "Your Song" every Sunday after Lovespell Presents on ABS-CBN. Featuring Erik Santos' version of "Mambi sa Bituing Marahuyo".

It don't hurt it sings hers, Erik Cornelio and Jason Abalos in an unforgettable love triangle. Now that E-day is just a few heartbeats away, "Your Song" unleash the angles and tangles of forever.

New heights

Gaugher echoed throughout the SMX Convention Center at Q. 11 round-round it was a make-for-love airport for Host Gala presentations "Bringing TV to New Heights."

A surprise shi?" was pronounced by Eh Tin Yi Stephanie and Hilary with all of the channel's on-screen stars including their newest member Charlene Gonzales.

I teased Charlie, "Good thing Ago allowed you to do a show again." She said, smiling. "Ago and I support each other. He knows I'm interest hosting. So big deal if we're on different sides of the fence.

"At the end of the day we come home to each other and we sign docs about work. That may now relationship doesn't stagnate." Mr. Ago M release shares have we said is excited to be part of the network "Da Rules TV."

'Little Stars' search

Calling all cute and smart kids, 4 to 7 years old. Join Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall's "Search for Lil' Bebe Stars 2008. "It's the contest that started it all for child sensation KJ "Bebe" Kaybai. Over P500,000 worth of prizes are at stake.

Call 661-1405 loc. 138 for details. Be the "Next" bet!

E-mail watertightshotlinger-ht@yahoo.com.

MARTHA Stewart helps Bea Lengson with "Iris's Cheesecake" recipe during a Jan. 21 taping of "The Martha Stewart Show" in New York. The special Super Bowl edition of the show was to air Feb. 3.

AT THE CINEMAS

SUBWAY 1
1 ONE MISSED CALL
2 CLOVERFIELD
3 IN THE NAME OF THE KING
4 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 2

SUBWAY 6
1 IN THE NAME OF THE KING
2 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 2
3 CLOVERFIELD
4 SAW 4
5 BLOOD & THE CHAMPAGNE
6 27 DRESSES
7 ONE MISSED CALL

GREENBELT 1
1 27 DRESSES
2 CLOVERFIELD

GREENBELT 3
1 27 DRESSES
2 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 2
3 BAMBI 4
4 P.S. I LOVE YOU
5 ONE MISSED CALL

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 27 DRESSES
2 ONE MISSED CALL
3 SAW 4
4 IN THE NAME OF THE KING
5 CLOVERFIELD

AYALA CENTER CEBU
1 CLOVERFIELD
2 BLOOD & THE CHAMPAGNE
3 SAW 4
4 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 2

MARKET! MARKET!
1 CLOVERFIELD
2 SAW 4
3 27 DRESSES
4 IN THE NAME OF THE KING
5 ONE MISSED CALL

TRINOMA
1 BLOOD & THE CHAMPAGNE
2 SAW 4
3 27 DRESSES
4 IN THE NAME OF THE KING
5 ONE MISSED CALL
6 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 2
7 CLOVERFIELD

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

Glorietta — Promenade Mania, January 28 to February 4

Greenbelt — Welcome 2008 Sale, January 11 to February 3

Alabang Town Center — Alive & The Chipmunks Live at Alabang Town Center, January 26 & 27, 11am, 2pm & 5pm, Activity Center

Ayala Center Cebu — Welcome 2008 Sale, January 11 to February 3

Market! Market! — Welcome 2008 Sale, January 11 to February 3

Cristafilm — Rosemary Philippines presents Tchaikovsky up to Alabang, January 11 to 27, 2007. For inquiries, pls. call 887-3116 or visit www.rosemary-philippines.com

Ayala Museum — Masters of Philippine Art. Paintings by Juan Luna, Fernando Amorsolo, and Fernando Zobel. For more info, pls. call 757-7117 or 811-3131 or visit ayalamuseum_inquiry@yahoo.com.ph

Tri Noma — Welcome 2008 Sale, January 11 to February 3

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CHOOSE YOUR *Valentine* SHOW

KUH Ledesma

BITUIN Escalante

CHRISTIAN Bautista

SARAH Geronimo

EVERY YEAR, Inquirer Entertainment helps readers pick the best shows for that special date, by adding the concert artists what they have in store for audiences. This is part three of the 2008 series.

Kuh Ledesma

"Entertainment" with guests Nonoy Zuñiga, Mark Bautista and Jaypee, Feb. 14, Shangri-La Hotel, Makati. Call 813-8888.

When you're not doing a concert, how do you celebrate Valentine's Day?

I can't remember any year since I started singing that I didn't do a Valentine show, but if I didn't, I must have been out on a dinner date. Seems like it's the most popular thing to do.

What's the most romantic Valentine's Day you've ever experienced?

I can't really say I've had a very romantic Valentine experience, but I remember my first boyfriend who sent me flowers and a love letter. Love letters for me are always special.

What's an ideal Valentine date?

My ideal Valentine date of course is with someone I've head over heels in love with. If I'm not that in love, I don't want to pretend or go out with that person because I might regret the things that might happen and be forced to think I'm in love, when in fact I'm not.

Who's your fantasy date?

There's a fantasy Valentine's date. He would prepare a unique place for dinner, maybe up on a flat roof, somewhere with a view, or he can take me to Rome or Tuscany or Senegal(!) in Odessa, Russia(!) or on Red Horse ran out south, just by ourselves, a siesta. (We can rent a perjorene and just put up a white bed sheet.) After which we can have some music and dance all night. The rest, let's leave to our imaginations. Of course I'm only willing to do all that if I were married to the man.

What's the most romantic love song?

"From This Moment" by Shania Twain.

If you were not doing a show, who would you watch?

I'd really love to watch Seal in concert.

Why should we watch your show?

Because you'd be sure in love already on what love really should be.

Bituin Escalante

"Valen From the Heart," with Diwa, Feb. 11, Ateneo Hub of Batanes Luz Pilipo.

When you're not doing a concert, how do you celebrate Valentine's Day?

We celebrate my sister's birthday.

What's the most romantic Valentine's Day you've ever experienced?

A picnic blanket, Pilsek kneeling (Ian), a large Coke on a football field under the stars. Romantics are cheap dates.

What's an ideal Valentine date?

A quiet day together in a secluded place with no interruptions.

Who's your fantasy date?

Christopher Walken circa "Dave Insider." Or, with the younger ones, a toss up between Edward Scissorhands and James Dobrey.

What's the most romantic love song?

You're asking the impossible!

If you were not doing a show, who would you watch?

On the Lido? I would watch a pick-up rehearsal of Pete's "Mile Deep," a comedy examining our skewed sense of humor. Seriously.

Why should we watch your show?

Why not!

Sarah Geronimo, Christian Bautista

"All 4 Love" with Erik Santos and Rachelle Ann Go, Feb. 13, 8 p.m., Araneta Coliseum. Call 911-5555.

When you're not doing a concert, how do you celebrate Valentine's Day?

Sarah: Sometimes. Have dinner with my family.

Christian Bautista: Usually I go out on a date, with someone I love.

What's the most romantic Valentine's Day you've ever experienced?

Christian: When I surprised my date with flowers the night before, without her expecting it.

What's an ideal Valentine date?

Sarah: Lying in the sand in the middle of the night, stargazing.

Christian: Dinner by candlelight under the stars on the beach.

Who's your fantasy date?

Sarah: Superman.

Christian: Nicole Kidman.

What's the most romantic love song?

Sarah: "I Honestly Love You."

Christian: "If You're Not the One" by Daniel Bedingfield.

If you were not doing a show, who would you watch?

Sarah: Marcelo S.

Christian: I'd watch the So'fe concert.

Why should we watch your show?

Sarah: We've been wanting to give our audience a show that's full of love and affection. We also want to share with them our favorite love songs.

Christian: It's a chance for the audience to watch us four together again in a full concert. They will see us perform more naturally and more seasoned than before. The event does not always happen. The concert will be full of great love songs that everyone loves all ages will surely enjoy!

ONE PROUD MAMA starts this Monday on Q (11)

Behind every successful man is a woman – that's the common notion. But what we don't always remember is this – behind every successful person is ONE PROUD MAMA. Enter GMA Channel 11's newest primetime public affairs program, ONE PROUD MAMA, hosted by Diffa diva Jaya.

A weekly magazine talk show, ONE PROUD MAMA brings to the spotlight the mothers of some of the country's most famous personalities. Mostly, the show will feature non-celebrity mothers who have "quietly" supported their successful children.

Program host Jaya shares, "The mothers are such characters. They're more vibrant than their own children. They have a lot of stories, binuo ko kasi pagkabata, yung ano nila, kung paano ngalit ng nanay nila when they were young, what were their hobbies of one young and nasaan sila ngayon."

Offering a peek into the personal, and at times, very comedic relationship between the mothers and their famous children, ONE PROUD MAMA will share unreleased information that only the mothers know.

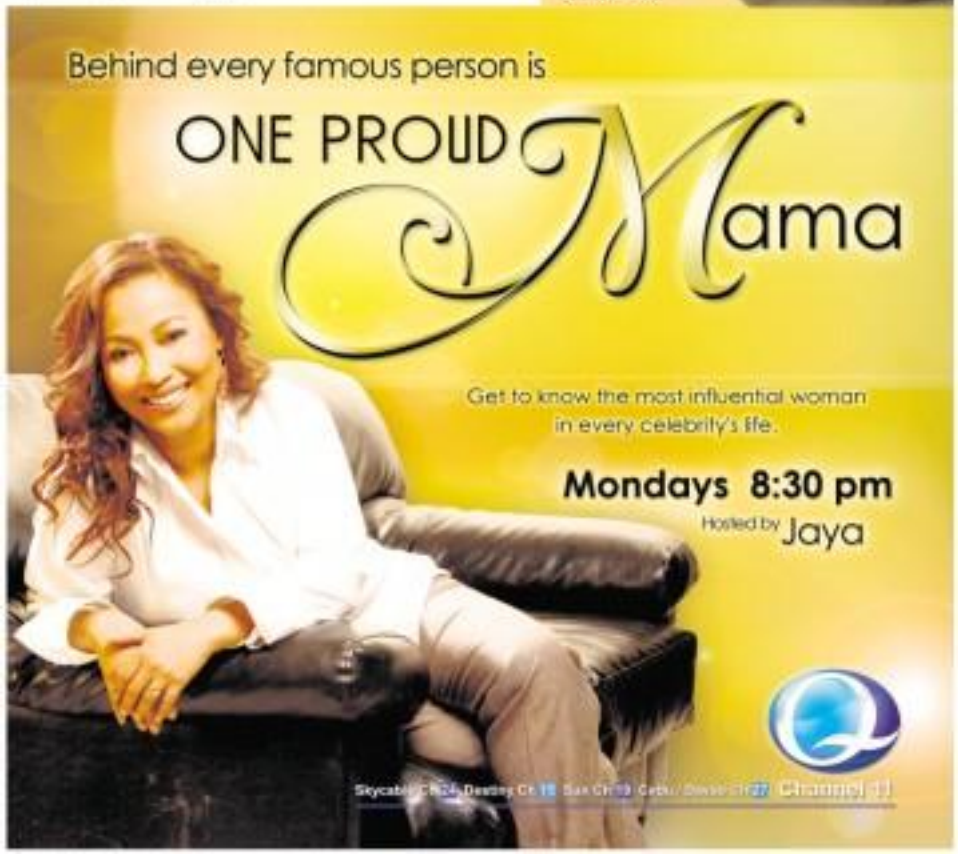
"Astrologan kasapa nila yung deepest stories ng mga personality kasi nung mga bata namay, nasa likuran lang sila. Nandun sila sa kusina, sa kalsada nang yung mga kanta," says Jaya. Through their mothers, the untold secrets of these celebrities will finally be revealed. Viewers will have the chance to take a glimpse of some of the celebrities' childhood albums, their favorite childhood toys or even their old love letters.

"It's really fun, of interviewing Dulingcan, Melon Nalagang responsible ka 'nagagalit' ako sa email ko kasi pinapasabi niya yung girlfriend niya na bawal na siya. Nakakatawa! Hindi siya nagpa-'nalagan'," she jokes. And for its pilot episode this Monday, ONE PROUD MAMA will feature no less than the mother of the country's ultimate singer and songwriter, Ogie Alcasid.

A small man with big dreams, Ogie excels at his work in local. Belonging. He was destined to succeed – equipped with talent, determination, hard work and of course, the loving support of his woman who gave him the memorable "Mamay" Alcasid, his ONE PROUD MAMA!

Get to know the woman behind his success and be sure to catch some of Ogie's juicy secrets which will be revealed in this game "MAMA SAID CHUVAH!"

ONE PROUD MAMA
airs every Monday, 8:30 pm on Q Channel 11
beginning February 4



ENTERTAINMENT

DID YOU KNOW...

Ricky Lee film festival in Daet starts today

A RICKY LEE film festival starts today in the City of Daet in Camarines Norte. The festival runs till Feb. 10 and will feature his prize-winning films, including "Sakaling" and "Himala." The event is organized by Daet Mayor Tito Sarion. Lee will conduct a writing workshop; Cirio Alfiler and Chando Gomez, an acting workshop.

'Combo' stars of yore rock La Union town

By Frank Cimatu
Inquirer Northern Luzon

SAN JUAN, La Union—Weekend before last, an unarmed van sporting 537,703 kilometers away from planet Earth.

To tell Filk addicts, anything could happen. But nothing remotely devastating did. What did happen was—according to local businessman Cedric "Sonny" Sabanal, man on this strolling cupid of the Kerth who purchased

The 30th Philippine International Long Board Surfing Competition was ongoing. However, the biggest event was the unofficial "reunion" reunion concert of Philippine Classic Rock (PCR), an ex-group of "combination" from the '70s to the early '70s.

PCR reunion concert participants are not fabulous. Talking. Middle-to-very-fabulous. They choose running up those pines before leaving for Sagada or Baguio. This time for instance, who should we see up but the premiere, the shining exuberance of the '60s, '70s and early '70s.

The Friday gig started at 8 p.m. with the Rhoda Cruz, Basil Valdez, Eliza Hernandez and the Queen Sisters singing the popular songs of their time.

Holding prepared the sound for the Filk chart-chef Gene Genevieve de Te, Genevieve should be in a rocking chair. But he's still ... rocking.

Sachets exhaled and wailed as Genevieve rocked the stage with "Dustbowl Boogie" and "I Saw Her Standing There."

Talk about history.

Genevieve framed his first band, G-Stem Trio, in 1955. Then he put together Rumourchaser, a group for Independent Pictures, headlining the Late Bar Lounge in 1960. In formed God Only and Her Instrumentals three years later, the Debus.

Cool cat

The bandleader is also a guitar maker, session artist, key boardist, guitarist and composer, as well as the singing voice behind Jose Mari Gonzales and Rosario Vasquez.

At the OUR "reunion" concert, Genevieve swapped his fingers and turned his fists to the rhythm like a six- reel cat in his prime.

Aside from the Hernandezes, other groups present were the 6 Horsemen, Holy Head, Aftermath, Rainforest, Electric Boots, Charon's Boy, Cool Blood, Sundowners, IC, Charlie Band, Bobo Rides, Where's ... Charlie Band, Funny Earthlings, OGBB, Wally Gonzales, We're Back, and Mountainside.

And there was Bonding.

Front man from Genesis sing the band's biggest hits—including "Home Entanglement" and "Manila"—which had the typically stoic La Union reunion running one another playfully and spilling their beer.

The best part of the two-day musical event was, it was free.

SHOW TIME

Julia, Mau in mall shows

Julia Fordham

British singer-songwriter Julia Fordham is set to do a series of shows in Ayala Centers nationwide: Pavilion, Feb. 8, 6:30 p.m.; Alabang Town Center, Feb. 9, 7 p.m.; Glorietta, Makati, Feb. 13, 6:30 p.m.; Ayala Center Cebu.

All shows are for free.

Mau Marcelo

Mau Marcelo performs in SM Bacoor, Cavite, Feb. 9; SM Mall...., Baliwag, Feb. 17; SM Lucena, Quezon, March.

The Philippine Idol will sing songs from her album "I Miss Ya' Yes" (Sony BMG). All shows start at 5 p.m. Every purchase of the album comes with a free poster and access to meet Mau in person after the shows. She will autograph the album and posters.

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movietime SHOWTIME

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MOVIEWORLD

GALLERIA

1 ALIENS vs. PREDATOR 2 - THE	6 PS. I LOVE YOU
2 27 DRESSES	7 ONE MISSED CALL
3 IN THE NAME of the KING	8 indistinct. ROOOMMM

Two for the film award derbies

AS US FILM AWARDS DISCIPS GEAR UP for their annual shutdown, movie buffs are speculating about which motion picture could figure strongly in Jarot's cinematic deliberations.

This early, two "small" productions are making a big noise as potential award winners for the past film year.

"Into the Wild," directed by acting icon Sean Penn, is about a wealthy young man (played by Emile Hirsch) who gives everything up to fulfill his dream of becoming one with nature.

Based on a true story, the film has won rave reviews because it's an uncompromising ride to vision. It took roughly seven months to film in more than 30 locations, because it followed its protagonist's real journey – all the way up to Alaska, where he died of starvation.

The story has a tragic denouement, but people who've previewed the film like the profound inner exploration from its theme, which is about one need to look for the authenticity in our own lives and not be put off by what others say about us.

Personal triumph

"It'll post like while you have it," the film further says. And, it shows how, despite its young protagonist's abridged life, he lived it to the fullest.

"Into the Wild" is a personal triumph for its new star, Emile Hirsch. Director Penn is profuse with praise for his young lead actor, because Hirsch had no stunt double and had to do everything his character has to go through in the course of his long and rigorous journey, no matter how dangerous.

Penn was so inspired by his protagonist's story that he patiently waited for a full calendar before production was granted to him to turn it into a movie. Well, the project was worth the long wait, and is poised to win some top awards in this year's movie derbies.

Also a front-runner is "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly," another film with an unusual protagonist. Visual artist Julian Schnabel's movie is about a man who's so completely disabled that he can communicate with others only by blinking his left eye. Amazingly, this extremely limited skill has enabled him to "write" an entire book!

What the people caring for him have done is to draw him the letters of the alphabet. When they point to a letter he wants to use, he blinks. Thus, with great patience and caring, they help him spell out what he wants to say word after slowly spelled word!

Unusual story

Expectedly, Schnabel's movie has won plaudits for its unusual story about the resilience and indomitability of the human spirit. Other people in the movie's praying mind's situation would have given up, but he turns his extreme disability into a quiet triumph.

The fact that unusual movies like "Into the Wild" and "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly" are being touted as strong contenders for awards proves that alternative, personal and inspiring films aren't relegated "down to the shelf," but speak vividly to a broad and growing audience.

These films may not appeal to as large an audience as the warring masses that go wild over modern-time cinema's action extravaganza blockbusters, but they have found their niche, and their influence is increasing.

Interestingly, both films are based on real life experiences, unique or even bizarre.

Michelle Williams: My heart is broken

LOS ANGELES – IN HIS FIRST PUBLIC statement since the death of her former companion Heath Ledger, actress Michelle Williams said she was suffering from a broken heart and asked for privacy for her and daughter Matilda.

"Please respect our need to grieve privately," Williams said in a statement released Friday. "My heart is broken."

Williams, 27, and Ledger, an Australian actor, met on the set of the 2005 movie "Brokeback Mountain." They fell in love and had Matilda, who is now 2 years old. They split up in September.

"I am the mother of the most tenderhearted, high-spirited, beautiful little girl who is the spitting image of her father," Williams said in her statement.

Neither has said anything about the present in her that reveals itself every day. His family and friends Matilda as she whispers to trees, hugs animals, and takes steps near as a time and we know he is with us still. She will be brought up with the best memories of him."

Ledger, 28, and Williams lived together in New York and there was speculation they planned to marry, although they never confirmed an engagement.

Ledger was found dead in his bed on Jan. 22 in his New York apartment. The actor's body has been flown home to Australia where his family is arranging a private funeral and memorial. Reuters

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Jarot

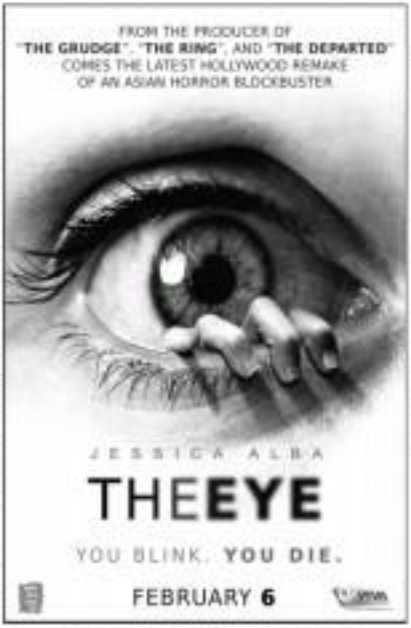
These films may not appeal to a large audience but they have found their niche

Though they may seem to be. Which only goes to show: Life isn't only stranger than fiction, it's also more challenging, instructive and inspiring!

Out on video

The comedy movie, "Spot Dapur, Dapur Apur," stars Rafi's Mae Quintic, Eugene Domingo, Pekwang and Candy Pangilinan as hotem buddies who have to contend with all sorts of funny predicaments as domestic workers in Hong Kong.

And "Butterfly on a Wheel" pits Pinoy Bowman against Gerard Butler in a suspelling drama about a kidnapper (Dave Ian) who snatches Butler's beautiful young daughter to force him to kill an innocent man to save his own child.



Swag new cocaine to stars?

Love Month Movie Special!

Sexy Jessica Alba looks for true love in 'Good Luck Chuck'

Totally Sexiest Woman in the World Jessica Alba of FANTASTIC 4, stars as Cam, a cute and hopelessly clutzy swinger specialized in search of true love in the hot new feel good romantic comedy

Enter Chuck (Dane Cook), cursed to help women find their true love with the kind guy they always with. After stealing the feed, Chuck realizes Cam is the girl of his dreams. Now, he has to break his heart before she can win hers.

Bring someone to the Decent Date Movie Ever!

Rated: Adults Only due to nudity and sexual content
Showing in selected theatres only, due to R-18 rating

The romance begins Feb 6!

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Rebecca V. Sapnden

(Concluded)

LOS ANGELES—WE CONTINUE our column on the Sundance swag scene, as experienced by two actresses who were on a shopping spree without once shelling out cash or whipping out credit cards, at these "gifting suites" on Park City, Utah's Main Street.

The two celebs were accompanied by our reporter-friend, who facilitated these ladies' entrance into the swag suites so he can write a story about the jobless (unless-rules) shopping expedition. Can you believe that at no thing gives away for free to celebs (even

FREEBIES at the Sundance film fest made for a cash-less shopping expedition

nobies, former Olympians and many friends! he ones flew in just for the freebies), in addition to boots, leather coats, eyelash conditioners, bottles of wine, facial creams and many others, are our clients?

Bloomberg News' Rick Meltzer reported that Jeremy Walker, a New York public relations agent who represented several films at the winter film festival, wrote a letter to bloggers warning them about the alleged swag. Meltzer quoted a portion of Walker's letter: "We've snatched swag, like routine, men nice, sound, humble, sensitive people (NO celebrity). Like routine, swag producers a giddy high of self-importance and expense entitlement. As with cocaine, once tasted, the enticement of swag instantly wants more."

So here's more of our Sundance swag report.

Extra suitcases

Our colleague chuckled when he described in vivid detail the hurried look in the eldest actress' face as the disabled uncle-assistant, alone a hunched bags in her hands, and tried to catch her flight.

Seeing a newspaper photo of a well-to-do British actor holding a freebie snare in a B-sedanes-cocis intended to attract an other English thespian who gleefully told us in an on-line interview about how he has warmed considerably to Sundance's swag allure. This guy admitted how he was unable at first to dig into the freebie bags but when he saw fellow thespians lugging bags and bags of the free stuff, he got into it, too.

Many in these back-to-Sundance-for-the-hunting year, he brought extra suitcases which were empty so he can stuff them with swag. He proudly pointed out that his outfit that day of the press con, from head to toe, even his underwear, was all courtesy of Brandstore.

Come to think of it — both these two fit to join the blockbuster movie franchise. But which English thespian is out to the cast of this popular film series? Perhaps actor A has told some B about the essential charms of Sundance.

What festival!

A common joke among Sundance swag goers is that somewhere in Park City, a festival is going on. There are stories saying that some celebs fly in Sundance just to invade the gifting salons and don't bother to watch even one film.

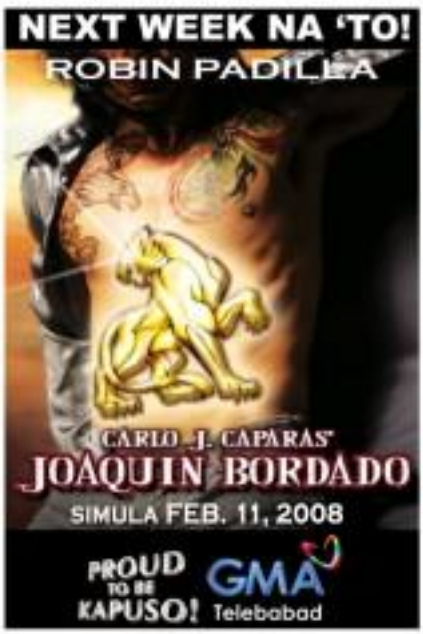
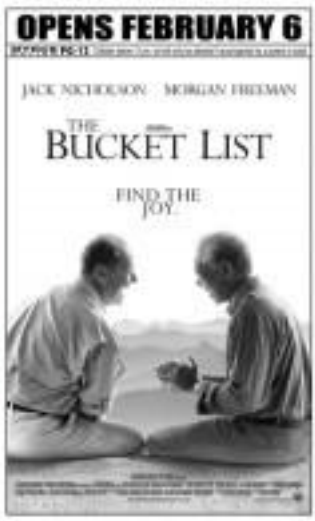
News reports confirmed the increasing presence of these freebie lounges on Park City's Main Street. US News reported that almost 120 pennies were issued to films that hosted gifting suites in the recently held festival, as compared to 79 last year.

Sundance Institute founder Robert Redford is said to be miffed at the growing opinion of Sundance as the best place for swags instead of the image that it wants to cultivate. The no-commercialism haven of indie films. Tell that to a young, promising artist who exclaimed about Brandstore, as he posed with his free pair of sneakers, "It's great! There is no other film festival in the world that does it like Sundance!"

'Focus on Film'

The festival organizers are very much aware of the "problem" that this year, they adopted "Focus on Film" as the fest's slogan. But at the press headquarters, these free features that displayed this rallying cry were seen flying off the shelves as quickly as the coupons for free full-body laser-wearing procedures (whatever in earth those are!) at the gifting lounges were.

Also per LA Times, the other year, the fest folks reportedly sent "threatening trademark infringement and/or implied association letters" to the owners of the major venue of the gifting suites. Next year, these freebie spots will probably hand out "Focus on Swag" buttons alongside iPod cases with diamond accents.

In the meantime, before they parted, our two celebs (also never ungrateful by Sundance's swag allure) promised to allot more time next year to prowling the gifting suites. As for our fearless investigator, we assured to make him a shirt that read, "My friends went to the Sundance swag suites and all I got was a freakin' perfume."

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